HOSPITALS, HOUSING & SANITATION

THE CORK COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH, 1925-1934

MIDLETON COTTAGE HOSPITAL, COUNTY CORK

TADGH QUILL-MANLEY

HOSPITALS, HOUSING & SANITATION: THE CORK COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH, 1925-1934

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INTRODUCTION

Between the spring of 1925 and the close of 1934, communities across County Cork experienced a profound reshaping of their everyday environments—homes, hospitals, wells, and roads—driven not by towering edifices or grand speeches but by the determined restructuring of local governance. With the Irish Free State still finding its feet, county-wide councils were reformed and empowered, dissolving the patchwork of small urban and rural sanitary boards that had long operated in isolation. This consolidation created a new framework for co-operation, enabling practical solutions to flow more swiftly from council chambers into village squares.

In those early months, council offices served as crucibles for change. Former clerks of disparate boards gathered around scarred tables, poring over long-neglected reports on water quality and housing standards. They replaced rivalries with shared objectives, transferring responsibilities to unified committees that could allocate resources across the county's varied landscape. Where once a lone inspector struggled to supply clean water to a single district, teams of surveyors now coordinated efforts county-wide, mapping springs, wells, and shallow boreholes to build comprehensive networks of life-giving pipes. Parallel to these administrative reforms, housing and healthcare initiatives blossomed. Dilapidated cottages, whose leaky roofs and crumbling walls had been accepted as the norm, were slated for replacement or substantial repair. Rather than rely on charity models, the new councils introduced cooperative tenancy schemes: a blend of modest tenant contributions and central grants that honoured residents' investment in their own homes. Architects and builders experimented with novel materials—pre-cast concrete blocks, for instance—that reduced costs without sacrificing durability. Through workshops in rural parish halls, families were invited to help shape the design of these houses, ensuring that each floor plan accommodated local customs, from indoor drying racks to hearths positioned for maximum warmth.

At the same time, medical provision began to transcend its scattered, workhouse-centric legacy. Local infirmaries were refurbished—not as relics of a punitive past but as welcoming clinics offering outpatient care, midwifery services, and preventive screenings. Councillors and medical officers collaborated to standardise training for nurses and attendants, establishing county-sponsored scholarships so that promising students from small villages could learn modern techniques before returning home. In sessions held by lantern-light in remote parishes, lay health promoters learned to recognise the early signs of infectious disease and to oversee sanitation drills, teaching neighbours the art of boiling water or constructing simple filter beds from sand and charcoal.

Sanitation, too, emerged from the shadows of neglect. Where open drains once meandered alongside muddy paths, engineered channels now guided wastewater away from homes and marketplaces. Mains water schemes were plotted on newly published county maps, with each route calculated to maintain the adequate pressure, and avoid cross-contamination. Teams of labourers laid kilometres of pipe in summer heat, while local farmers, wary at first, soon welcomed the prospect of reliable water for livestock as well as households. Conservation committees had formed in market towns, advocating for ongoing maintenance and encouraging schoolchildren to adopt water-wise practices.

Underpinning each of these strands was the fundamental belief that local government, properly structured and resourced, held the key to communal well-being. Council minutes from the late 1920s reflect this shift in mindset: debates over road repairs gave way to discussions on infant mortality statistics; ratepayer petitions for reduced levies were countered by proposals to invest in sewerage expansions; and reports on agriculture began to include sections on the health of rural labourers, linking crop yields to human vitality.

This manuscript, titled ‘*Hospitals, Housing & Sanitation: The Cork County Board of Health, 1925–1934*,’ unfolds across four important inter-woven narratives: administrative

transformation, housing innovation, healthcare renewal, and sanitation engineering. Our first narrative explores how sweeping reforms in local governance—merging boards, clarifying mandates, and pooling expertise—laid the groundwork for co-ordinated action. The second tracks the evolution of housing policies, from tenant-led cottage designs to the emergence of semi-rural estates that balanced tradition with modern comforts. The third examines the rebirth of medical facilities and services, revealing how preventive care and community training reshaped perceptions of health. The fourth delves into the technical and social dimensions of water and waste management, from hydrological surveys to village-led maintenance schemes.

Throughout, voices from the period—tenant letters, nurses' diaries, council minutes, and local newspaper accounts—bring these themes to life, illustrating how policy became practice in kitchens and schoolrooms, farms and fairgrounds. What emerges is a story of quiet transformation: of how a single act of governmental restructuring rippled outward to alter the very texture of daily existence.

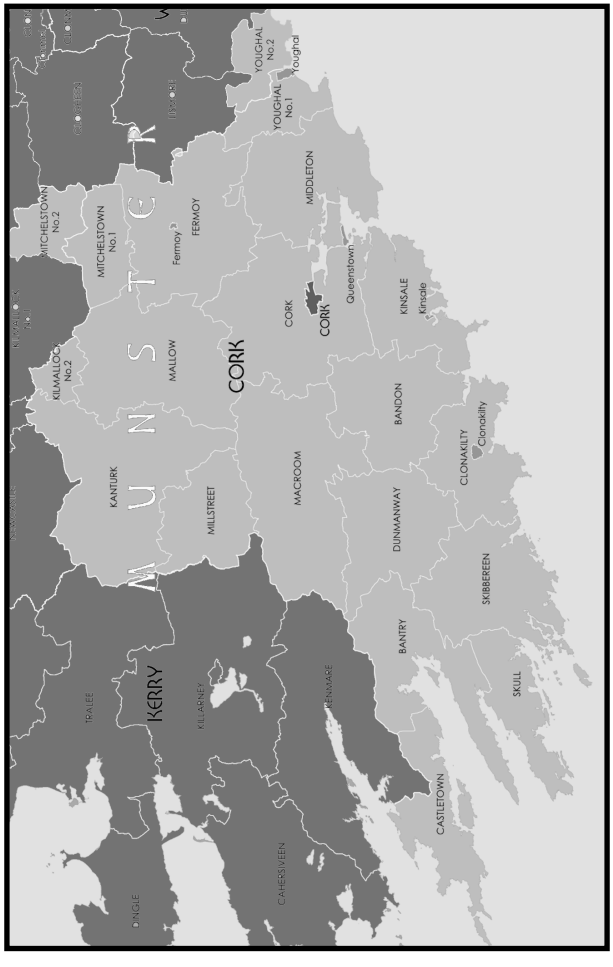
While this study focuses on one county, it also places Cork city and county in dialogue with broader currents across the new state. Comparisons with neighbouring regions illuminate both shared hurdles and distinctive local solutions, also highlighting the ways in which communities adapted central guidelines to fit their unique social fabrics. In doing so, this account offers a fresh perspective on the early Free State era: one centred not on grand institutions or national politics, but on the ripple effects of empowered local governance, and the determined people who turned policy into progress.

This work is the result of a personal side project, undertaken out of interest by a college student rather than as part of any formal academic programme or funded research. It relies on historical records that were often faded, smudged, or incomplete, and while every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, some errors or oversights may remain. This is not presented as a definitive or authoritative account, but as an honest attempt to explore an overlooked aspect of local history, using the resources and free-time available. Readers

are encouraged to approach it in that spirit—and to be kind enough not to expect perfection from what was ultimately a labour of curiosity and enthusiasm, rather than a professional commission.

HOSPITALS, HOUSING & SANITATION

The Cork County Board of Health



The administrative districts established in County Cork following the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898.

The old Clonakilty Workhouse, Co. Cork. This complex functioned as a workhouse from 1852 to 1924, then served as a county home and district hospital. Today, the site is home to Clonakilty Community Hospital.

(Source: irishheritagenews.ie 30/11/2022)

The old Cork Union Workhouse site
(Source: workhouses.org.uk)

HOSPITALS, HOUSING & SANITATION

Theme / Area of Focus	***Analysis***
Administrative Transformation	The 1923 Local Government Act and County Scheme Orders (1924) abolished Rural District Councils, consolidating their functions under County Boards of Health. This centralised welfare and health administration, streamlining services at county level.
Healthcare Infrastructure	Many former workhouse infirmaries (e.g. in Cork Union and Mallow) were repurposed as County Homes and District Hospitals. Facilities like St Finbarr's became pivotal hubs for maternity, infectious disease, and chronic care.
Housing Provision	Labourers' cottages were developed through state-backed housing acts. Examples include 59 homes proposed in Castletownbere (1932), and 20 concrete-block units built in Skibbereen (1932–33). These schemes reflected a shift toward additional state responsibility for rural housing.
Sanitation & Water Supply	The Board initiated projects to improve sewerage, waste disposal, and drinking water infrastructure in rural areas—an effort previously managed by fragmented local bodies. This aligned with emerging public health standards.
Statutory and Legal Frameworks	Key legislation included the Local Government (Temporary Provisions) Act 1923, Housing Acts of 1925, 1929, 1931, and County Scheme Orders of 1924. These legal instruments enabled county-led control over housing, health, and sanitation.
Rural Public Health Philosophy	Inspired by Free State modernisation ideals, rural public health was re-conceptualised as a civic duty. Welfare was no longer purely charitable, but a right delivered via a regional, yet increasingly centralised administration.
Resistance or Bureaucratic Inertia?	Financial constraints, political opposition, and institutional inertia (e.g. poor coordination between local and national authorities) often slowed or diluted reform efforts. Nevertheless, gradual structural change was achieved.
Funding and Central–Local Dynamics	Most projects were co-funded: local rates were supplemented by national grants via the Department of Local Government and Public Health. Fiscal prudence often limited the scale of interventions, especially during the economic depression of the early 1930s.

HOSPITALS, HOUSING & SANITATION
WORKS IN PROGRESS

First Steps:

In the aftermath of the establishment of the Irish Free State, the Cork County Board of Health emerged as a critical institutional apparatus, through which the nascent state's welfare ambitions were enacted at the regional level. It also swallowed the area of Cork City and its immediate hinterland, previously administered by the Cork Board of Guardians.[1] Between 1925 and 1934, the Board developed a multifaceted portfolio that extended far beyond its initial medical mandate, encompassing a broad spectrum of public health, housing, sanitation, and infrastructural undertakings. In the relative vacuum of centralised bureaucratic coherence during the early Free State period, the Cork County Board functioned as a 'de facto' arm of state-building, actively embedding state presence in the quotidian realities of rural life. Much of this work was overseen by the prolific and influential William J. Broderick, a county councillor and TD who served as Chairman of Cork County Council, the Co. Cork Board of Public Assistance and the Cork County Board of Health, sometimes simultaneously.

Re-constituting Local Governance - Institutional Transition and Administrative Modernity:

The passage of the Irish Local Government (Temporary Provisions) Act 1923 and the subsequent implementation of the County Scheme Orders in 1924 catalysed the dissolution of the antiquated Poor Law system. This legislative pivot supplanted the Boards of Guardians and the operational structures of Workhouse Unions with newly consolidated Boards of Health and Public Assistance.[2] In Co. Cork, this administrative reconfiguration entailed a centralisation of formerly fragmented health and welfare responsibilities under the aegis of the County and District Boards. Furthermore, sections 3–10 of the Local Government Act

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[1] *Cork Board of Guardians. Irish Archives Resource.*

[2] *County Scheme Order, Cork No. 1, 1924. Irish Statute Book.*

1925 formally dissolved the Rural District Councils, transferring property, liabilities, and statutory duties—including those related to health—to county councils and their associated Boards of Health.[3] The Cork County Board of Health thus assumed jurisdiction over an expansive array of services, including general hospitals, county homes, dispensaries, and fever hospitals, while also extending its competencies into emergent domains such as social housing and public sanitation.[4] It can be summarised as follows:

Before 1925 – Rural District Councils (RDCs)	**After 1925 – Cork County Boards of Health & Public Assistance**
RDCs (e.g., Bandon, Bantry, Macroom, Youghal) managed rural housing, sanitation, drainage, water supply, burial grounds, and local public works.	The Local Government Act 1925 abolished RDCs and transferred their health, housing, and sanitation functions to County Councils via Boards of Health.
RDCs served as rural sanitary authorities under the Public Health Acts.	Boards of Health became rural sanitary authorities with jurisdiction over hospitals, housing, water, and public health infrastructure.
Elected RDC members oversaw labourers' cottages and sanitation schemes.	Boards were composed of County Council members and could appoint local health committees; they directed new housing and sanitation schemes.
Fragmented governance across multiple RDCs.	Unified administration under the Cork County Board of Health, enabling greater coordination of rural welfare services.

[3] *Local Government Act, 1925. Irish Statute Book.*

[4] *'Cork Boards of Public Assistance and Health 1924-1960.' Cork City and County Archives*

Rural Housing Policy - Addressing Structural Deficits and Material Conditions:

The persistence of sub-standard housing in rural Ireland represented one of the most visible legacies of nineteenth-century neglect. While incremental progress had been made under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, the rural housing stock by the 1920s was both quantitatively insufficient and qualitatively inadequate. Many of the so-called "Sheehan cottages," named for agrarian reformer D. D. Sheehan MP, were either dilapidated or unsuited to contemporary needs.[5]

Ruth McManus remarks that "state−aided housing schemes made a significant contribution to the housing stock between 1923 and 1940."[6] The Cork County Board of Health, leveraging statutory instruments such as the Housing (Building Facilities) Acts and subsequent Housing Acts of 1929 and 1931, mobilised public funds and local authority powers to initiate a range of rural housing interventions. Contemporary issues of the '*Irish Builder,*' the '*Irish Times*,' and the Dictionary of Irish Architects can provide some insight. In West Cork alone, under the leadership of architects such as Bartholomew O'Flynn and James O'Crowley,[7] among the more notable efforts were:

- Castletownbere (1932): The proposed construction of 59 labourers' cottages, indicative of acute housing pressures in the western extremities of the county.[8]
- Clonakilty (1933–1934): Planned development of between 16 and 28 housing units as part of a broader regional strategy to mitigate rural overcrowding.[9]

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[5] 'Birth of D. D. Sheehan, Nationalist Politician & Labour Leader.' Irish Lawyers. seamusdubhghaill.com

[6] McManus, R (2018). 'Tackling the Urban Housing Problem in the Irish Free State, 1922–1940.' Cambridge University Press.

[7] Dictionary of Irish Architects' Database

[8] IB 74, 10 Sep 1932, 818

[9] IB 76, 25 Aug 1934, 724.

- Skibbereen (1932–1933): The erection of 20 two-storey concrete-block dwellings, executed under the aegis of the Urban District Council in partnership with the Board; these homes exemplified developing architectural preferences, and a nascent turn to modern construction materials.[10] [11] [12]
- Whiddy Island (1934): The West Cork Board had commissioned two labourers' cottages on Whiddy Island, demonstrating even remote parts of the county received direct Board attention.[13]

Although modest in absolute terms, these housing schemes represented a paradigmatic shift in local governance. Housing provision was re-conceptualised as a public responsibility, grounded in state-society reciprocity, rather than residual charity or even centralised fiat. In this respect, the Cork County Board of Health became an instrumental vehicle for spatial justice and social modernisation.

Reconfiguring Medical Infrastructure - From Workhouse Legacies to District Hospitals:

Perhaps the most intricate aspect of the Board's remit during this specific decade was the rationalisation of healthcare infrastructure. The County Scheme Orders of 1924 enabled the conversion of defunct workhouse infirmaries into District Hospitals and County Homes. The most prominent exemplar was the transformation of the Cork Union Workhouse into the South Cork County Home and District Hospital, later renamed St Finbarr's Hospital. This facility operated as a central node in the region's health eco-system, providing maternity services, chronic disease management, and infectious disease isolation, while also serving as a training ground for nursing professionals.[14]

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[10] *IB 74, 30 Jul 1932, 698*

[11] *Irish Times 17/8/1933*

[12] *Irish Times 31/8/1933*

[13] *IB 76, 24 Mar 1934, 246*

[14] *'Survey of Hospital Archives in Ireland.' National Archives (2019).*

By the early 1930s, plans were under-way to construct a dedicated fever hospital on the St Finbarr's campus, with a projected investment of £200,000—a testament to both the scale of public health challenges, and the Free State's expanding fiscal commitment to healthcare infrastructure.[15] Dr. Condy, as the County Medical Officer for Health, also oversaw major improvements in health and social services in Cork City and County during this period.

Beyond this flagship institution, the Board supported a constellation of district and cottage hospitals in Bandon, Cobh (Cove), Kinsale, Macroom, Midleton, and Youghal, which collectively functioned as first points of contact for rural populations with limited mobility or financial means. In Mallow, the legacy workhouse infirmary continued to serve as a district hospital and was targeted for subsequent administrative overhaul, already under preliminary review by the early 1930s. The revised Mallow District Hospital (1933–34), arising from the initiative of the North Cork Board of Assistance to tender and accepted bids (~£31,441) for new district hospital facilities, signalled that the Board's role in health infrastructure was accompanied by housing and accommodation responsibilities. This project was overseen by the architect and surveyor, Patrick Coughlan.[16] [17] [18] [19]

In East Cork, for example, following the 1922 closure of the Youghal workhouse, its infirmary was retained as Youghal Cottage Hospital, operating under the new Board of Health system. It served acute and maternity needs throughout the

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[15] *'St.Finbarr's (South Cork County Home and Hospital) Overview.' Cork City and County Archives. IE 627/CCH*

[16] *'Saorstát Éireann - Report of the Commission on the Relief of the Sick and Destitute Poor, Including the Insane Poor' (1927). Lenus - The Irish Health Depository.*

[17] *Buildings of Ireland - Mallow General Hospital. National Built Heritage Service.*

[18] *Mallow Board of Guardians - Irish Archives Resource*

[19] *'Co. Cork - Mallow, County Hospital.' Dictionary of Irish Architects.*

1920s and beyond.[20] Additionally, the Fermoy workhouse and its infirmary, overseen by the Guardians until 1924, were subsumed into the County Board structure. Their archives reflected the continuity of health and boarding roles under the new administrative regime.[21]

It appears that such a model would serve as a source of inspiration during the early 21st century. As reported by the '*Irish Examiner*' in 2004, a study conducted by the British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body on healthcare delivery in rural areas concluded that the most effective approach involved a system in which acute hospitals were supported by smaller, local cottage hospitals. These smaller facilities, which often served older individuals and provided both day and residential care, were highlighted by Dr Jerry Cowley at the time as particularly suitable for Ireland. He noted that this model ensures sufficient resources, and guarantees that no patient needs to travel more than 20 miles to access acute medical services.[22]

Sanitation, Engineering, and Public Hygiene - Embedding the Technocratic State:

In addition to its medical and housing functions, the Cork County Board of Health assumed responsibility for an array of infrastructural improvements related to sanitation, waste disposal, and potable water provision. These activities, previously overseen by fragmented rural district councils, were now integrated into a unified public health vision.[23] Initiatives ranged from sewerage expansion and drainage remediation, to the installation of clean water systems in villages and rural hinterlands. These undertakings were more than technical adjustments; they constituted a form of

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[20] 'Youghal, Co. Cork.' workhouses.org.uk

[21] 'Fermoy Board of Guardians.' Cork City and County Archives. IE CCCA/ BG/89.

[22] Dundon, M (2004). 'Isle of Man Health System 'Should be Adopted Here'. Irish Examiner.

[23] 'Rural District Councils, 1899-1925.' Cork City and County Archives

technocratic statecraft that re-defined the spatial and institutional parameters of rural governance. Through these infrastructural investments, the Board not only improved material living conditions, but also reoriented civic expectations around the role of local government in fostering health and dignity.

Conclusion - Local Administration and the Architecture of Welfare:

As remarked by Donal Corcoran of UCC: "County boards of public health and new enlarged sanitary districts were created and workhouses were closed. Roads were improved, and support provided for private and public housing." However, "the administration of the Irish Free State was quickly changed from the British system of loosely co-ordinated boards and departments to a centralised Irish system." Corcoran concludes that the government quickly established a workable political and administrative structure in spite of the unfriendly climate. In his view, it did so because it provided diplomatic management to individuals pursuing peace, stability and prosperity following practically a decade of unrest. It proceeded quickly to construct the new state.[24]

By the close of this period in 1934, the Cork County Board of Health had evolved into a critical locus of state authority and welfare provision. Its expanding remit illustrates the emergent contours of burgeoning welfare initiatives, in which local bodies acted as co-producers of national re-construction. Whether through housing provision, healthcare delivery, or sanitation reform, the Board operationalised the Irish Free State's ambition to modernise Irish society from the ground up. The decade under review was neither linear nor unproblematic. Bureaucratic inertia, fiscal constraints, and political contestation frequently impeded progress. Yet the cumulative effect of the Board's interventions was greatly transformative.

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[24] Corcoran, D (2009). 'Public Policy in an Emerging State: The Irish Free State 1922-25.' University College Cork.

It rendered tangible the new State's promise of some level of improvement and inclusivity, laying the infrastructural and ideological groundwork for subsequent generations of public service. Professional historians assert that these Boards quickly became central to the administration of new welfare services. One review by Donnacha Seán Lucey in Oxford University Press' '*Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*' observes that "they established new local boards of health to administer public assistance and these quickly became dominated by middle-class groups."[25]

In examining the Cork County Board of Health between 1925 and 1934, one discerns the often-unseen processes by which domestic governance was operationalised not merely in constitutional or militaristic terms, but in the built environments and institutional routines of everyday life. The work of the Board can be summarised in the following table:

Function / Service	Role of County Boards of Health
Rural housing ("labourers' cottages")	Managed under new welfare remit
Hospitals & county homes	Repurposed workhouses into care facilities
Sanitation & water supply	Administrative control over public health infrastructure
Public assistance	Provided relief to poor, mothers, sick homeless, etc.

[25] *Lucey, DL (2015). 'The End of the Irish Poor Law: Welfare and Healthcare Reform in Revolutionary and Independent Ireland.' Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences.*

The various old Poor Law Union Workhouses were re-invigorated as 'cottage hospitals' by the Cork County Board of Health during the 1920s and 1930s. This image depicts Midleton Cottage Hospital.

HOSPITALS, HOUSING & SANITATION
A NEW BOARD FOR A NEW STATE, 1925-1926

In January 1925, the '*Cork Examiner*' reported that by formal sealed order, the South Cork Board of Public Assistance was dissolved, with the dissolution taking effect from 19 January that year. A similar order also dissolved the North Cork County Board of Health, effective from the same date. Mr. Seán O'Farrell, who already served as Commissioner for the West Cork County District and for Co. Kerry, was appointed to act as Commissioner in both cases. The dissolution of both boards was attributed to their supposed failure to comply with ministerial directives. Specifically, the boards had been instructed to appoint officials from within the existing staff to the newly created positions. Instead, they opted to make external appointments, thereby supposedly increasing costs for ratepayers, through additional pension liabilities. Furthermore, concerns were also raised regarding the employment of allegedly inexperienced individuals in key roles. In the case of the South Cork Board, two positions were at issue: Secretary and Superintendent Assistance Officer. For the North Cork County Board of Health, the contested appointments involved the roles of Secretary, Superintendent Assistance Officer, and Solicitor. According to a report from Charleville, the North Cork County Board of Health was formally dissolved by order of the Minister for Local Government and Public Health, Mr. Seamus de Búrca. The dissolution followed the board's refusal to comply with instructions concerning the appointment of a Secretary. A sealed order was subsequently issued, replacing the board with Commissioner Seán O'Farrell, who assumed full administrative responsibility. The final meeting of the North Cork Board took place in Mallow shortly before the order came into effect.[26]

During July 1925, a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held in the Council Chamber at the Courthouse, chaired by Mr William J. Broderick. Present were several members, including Messrs. Cornelius O'Callaghan, D.

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[26] *Cork Examiner 16/1/1925*

Hinchin, C. F. Bailey, Richard Daly, Michael Walsh (Bandon), Timothy Corcoran, and Edmond Goold, alongside Mr A. H. Exham (Law Agent) and Mr E. Callanan (Secretary). The Secretary reported that communications had been sent to officers in the former rural district councils, instructing them to continue their duties as sanitary authorities until 1 October, and to prepare all financial accounts up to 1 July, including vouchers, for review. All districts responded, and their returns were discussed. However, the return from the Cork Rural District was deemed incomplete. While monthly accounts were included, there was no information regarding bank balances, labourers' cottages, or other vital matters. The Board resolved to defer discussion on Cork's return, until a full account was provided.

In contrast, the Bandon area was praised for its thorough reporting. The Clerk of the Rural Council had provided detailed accounts, and the district held a healthy balance of £1,300. The Board approved necessary cottage repairs in the district, amounting to £118 for 18 homes. Mr Hinchin noted that the failure to maintain cottages often led tenants to withhold rent. The town of Millstreet's position was flagged as concerning. While the area had £86 on hand, it faced £301 in cottage rent arrears, with an additional quarter's rent outstanding and £600 required for cottage repairs. The Board ordered all local officers to appear at the next meeting to clarify the situation. In Macroom, the board recorded a bank overdraft of £237 11s. 5d., cottage arrears of £920 15s., and an estimated £1,500 needed for repairs. These figures led to a decision to summon officials from that area as well. Kanturk was considered to be in relatively good standing, with a small balance owed to the treasurers (£2 9s. 4d.) and moderate cottage arrears (£266 14s. 6d.). Mr Hinchin raised concerns about delays in payment to labourers repairing cottages, urging resolution. In Skibbereen, the balance stood at £12 15s. 4d., with £381 10s. 11d. in rent arrears. Nevertheless, the area was considered well managed. Mr D. O'Callaghan highlighted an urgent housing need in fishing communities, but the Chairman said that no new cottage construction would be contemplated, until the Board had full clarity on its administrative position.

Mr Cornelius Buckley, M.C.C., raised the issue of a County Cork rural cottage scheme proposed in 1911. Though 140 cottages were approved in a 1915 inquiry and funds expended, no Provisional Order had been issued. The Board agreed to revisit the matter at a future meeting, once they received a complete report from the Cork area. Concerns were raised regarding unauthorised tenancy transfers, and speculation in labourers' cottages. Mr Hinchin claimed that some individuals who were not 'bona fide' labourers, had obtained cottages, including those who had sold farms for profit. Mr D. O'Callaghan estimated that 20% of cottages in his division were occupied by people never formally appointed, often through informal tenant transfers. The Board resolved that, henceforth, no transfer of tenancy or new appointments would occur without the matter being brought before and approved by the Board.

In Midleton, the Board deferred business due to incomplete returns. In Mallow, a more detailed investigation was requested following a report of a £247 debit balance despite a recent Council payment, and a credit of £95 7s. 8d. Additionally, Gurtroe, near Lombardstown, was reported to have lost its water supply, affecting 70 families. A scheme costing £4,900 was presented for a new water supply in Ballycotton, a key tourist district. However, the Chairman expressed reservations about embarking on significant new projects given the temporary status of the prevailing Board, which was expected to last only ten weeks. A deputation was invited to present at the next meeting.[27]

At the end of the month, Mr. W. J. Broderick, Chairman, presided at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health held in the County Council Chamber, Courthouse. The Chairman addressed the issue of the water supply at Castlemartyr, stating it was seriously deficient. The question arose as to whether the caretaker had been guilty of gross neglect, as the people had no water. Mr. Daly noted the matter was pressing. He had received numerous complaints, including one from the parish priest, indicating that the water

[27] *Cork Examiner 22/7/1925*

was unfit for use. As a result, people were forced to travel long distances to access wells. He suggested a report be obtained from the Medical Officer of Health, including a water sample for analysis. The caretaker should also report on the water supply, detailing his last visit and the frequency of visits in the last quarter. Additionally, Mr. Daly recommended that an independent engineer inspect the supply. The Chairman commented that it was ineffective to ask officials to report on their own performance, asserting that an independent inspection was necessary. Mr. Daly clarified he was not asking officials to self-assess, but that official reports would not preclude an independent inspection. At this point, the Secretary stated he had just received a report from Dr. J. P. O'Brien, Medical Officer of Health for Castlemartyr. Dr. O'Brien reported that the water supply to Mogeely and Castlemartyr required immediate attention. The springs at Crowbally were choked, resulting in the supply coming predominantly from the river — approximately five-sixths. The water was described as being muddy and dirty, especially after rainfall, and was allegedly unfit for consumption. He urged immediate action to restore the springs and purify the supply. Following discussion, it was decided that Mr. B. O'Flynn, B.E., engineer to the Cork Rural District, would inspect the Castlemartyr water supply.

The Board then turned to matters concerning the Midleton Rural District Council. Mr. J. Stanton, clerk, presented a financial statement indicating a prevailing bank balance of £193. Expected receipts from cottage rents by 30 September were £400, while arrears on labourers' cottages totalled £1,319 13s. 3d., against a total annual rental of £1,435 2s. 8d. Mr. Hinchin noted that almost a full year's rent was in arrears. In response to the Chairman, Mr. Stanton stated that £4,410 was the annual annuity on capital loans totalling £103,335. Required repairs to cottages would cost £220, exceeding the prevailing bank balance. The Chairman observed that the financial outlook was grim. He requested a full statement of capital charges for cottages throughout the county to assess the extent of financial commitments, suggesting the figure would exceed a million pounds (£). He was concerned that resources were being used to provide homes for people who were now unwilling to pay their rents.

Regarding urgent repairs in the Midleton area, Mr. Daly proposed that works proceed using the prevailing balance and upcoming rental income. This was agreed. Mr. D. O'Callaghan stressed the need for stricter rent collection. Mr. Daly proposed that rent collectors be summoned to the next meeting, and this was approved.

The Chairman inquired about whether or not all Midleton cottages were still occupied by 'bona fide' labourers. Mr. Stanton replied that most were. The Chairman suggested that rent collectors provide tenant qualifications, suspecting some cottages were occupied by ineligible individuals. Mr. Hinchin asked whether someone who had improved his status over 40 years could be evicted. The Chairman denied this, clarifying that he aimed to prevent abuse and ensure the cottages were used as intended. The Chairman also questioned the procedure for handling vacancies. Mr. Stanton said vacancies were listed on the agenda and filled by vote. The Chairman raised concerns about tenants informally transferring cottages, sometimes for money. Mr. Stanton acknowledged this occurred. The Chairman stated that in future, outgoing tenants must return the key to an official, and no new tenant would be recognised unless appointed by the Board.

The Council heard from Mr. P. H. Barry, M.C.C., regarding water schemes in Skehenagh, Dromahane, and Liscarroll. These had been approved at a sworn inquiry in September. He urged the Board to apply for the necessary loans and noted that £135,000 had been voted by the Dáil for unemployment relief, to be spent on water and road projects.
The Secretary confirmed he had received the schemes and correspondence from the Local Government Department regarding the grant. One letter clarified that much of the grant was allocated to already-sanctioned but incomplete schemes. Another letter recapped the history of the Mallow R.D.C.'s application for a £3,028 loan, and noted that approval was granted for £578 for the Skehenagh and Dromahane schemes. However, Liscarroll's scheme was delayed, mainly due to the unresolved way-leaves. The Chairman interpreted the situation optimistically, believing some funding might still be secured. Mr. Barry criticised the

rejection of the Cahirmoe scheme, noting that a government engineer dismissed it without visiting the reservoir. He requested a new inquiry. The Chairman cautioned that inquiries cost money. Mr. Barry suggested writing to request reasons for the refusal. The Board agreed to prioritise the two viable schemes — Skehenagh and Dromahane — and instructed the Secretary to apply for part of the £135,000 grant.

The Board then reviewed the financial situation of the Cork Rural Council. Mr. D. Egan, Clerk, apologised for previously failing to provide a financial statement and submitted one now. The balance due to the bank as of 23 June was £1,252 13s. 9d., with £1,524 17s. 6d. in unpaid orders, totalling £2,777 11s. 3d. Since then, £443 6s. 10d. had been received, leaving a net deficit of £2,334 4s. 5d. No funds had yet been received from the County Council for the prevailing half year, which would yield about £6,000. There were 1,456 labourers' cottages with an annual rental of £3,685 and arrears of approximately £1,630. A special demand issued to tenants had improved collections. Capital loans outstanding on 31 March were £221,033 for cottages and £23,735 for sanitary works. The total borrowed for cottages was £261,852, requiring annual repayments of £8,753 — 11 2/3d per £, with the Government covering 2d per £. Repairs for the prevailing year were estimated at £3,000. The Chairman asked Mr. Egan to tabulate the figures for the next meeting. Mr. Buckley, M.C.C., also raised a previous inquiry which approved 140 cottages, and the Chairman promised to revisit it when the full statement was available.

Engineer Mr. B. O'Flynn reported flooding at Victoria Road due to main sewer overflows during heavy rain and high tide. Although storm overflows and an auxiliary sewer helped, some houses still flooded. A further 90-yard sewer extension costing £140 was recommended. On the motion of Mr. Corcoran, seconded by Mr. Hinchin, it was agreed to proceed with the works. Additionally, at Mr. T. Kingston's request, a main sewer in Drimoleague would be extended to service three new houses.

A letter dated 27 July informed the Board that the Minister for Local Government proposed to change the County Home to Fermoy and establish a District Hospital in Mallow. The Board reviewed financial matters for the Kanturk R.D.C. Mr. W. Murphy, Clerk, stated that as of 23 June, the Council had no balance, with £2 9s. 4d. owed to the treasurers. Receipts since then were £94 18s. 6d., but outstanding claims totalled £570 15s. 5d. There were 625 labourers' cottages with a rental of £1,350 and arrears of £266 14s. 6d. The Chairman remarked that the figures were favourable. Arrears had been just over £90 at the end of the last half year. Mr. Murphy said annual repayments totalled around £2,273. There was a discrepancy over the £354 annual repayment for Kanturk Waterworks, which the Chairman said was estimated at £100 more. Mr. Murphy agreed to clarify this when submitting further details. Repairs for the year were estimated at £1,060, which the Chairman thought high. Mr. Linehan, Engineer, explained that due to past instability, only emergency repairs had been done, creating a backlog. Typically, repairs cost £300 annually. Further consideration was postponed pending more detailed reports. Water schemes for Watergrasshill and Coole were also noted, with Watergrasshill's scheme estimated at £5,200 and awaiting sanction.[28]

In the unavoidable absence of the Chairman (Mr W. J. Broderick, M.C.C.), Mr Cornelius O'Callaghan, M.C.C., presided at the meeting of the Cork County Board of Health in August 1925. The other members present were—Messrs. Michael Walsh (Bandon), R. Daly, D. O'Callaghan, and D. Hinchin. Messrs. Eugene Callanan, Secretary to the County Council, and A. H. Exham, Law Agent, were also in attendance. The meeting was convened to consider the financial matters of the rural districts of Clonakilty, Dunmanway, Kinsale, and Mitchelstown, the clerks of which were also present. Mr Hinchin brought to the Board's attention the condition of the water supply to the village of Knocknagree. The two pumps there had been out of order for the past twelve months. There were 300 inhabitants and 250 schoolchildren in the village, and it was unacceptable to have them without a water supply. It would require only a small

[28] *Cork Examiner 30/7/1925*

sum to repair the pumps, and he urged the Board to issue an order accordingly. The Chairman responded that the matter had been investigated. One pump was practically useless, and the other had no water. The contractor responsible for maintaining them had his salary deferred. The Secretary (Mr Callanan) added that he had written to the Clerk of the Rural District to request a report from the engineer regarding steps being taken to restore the supply, but had not received a reply. Mr Hinchin stressed the urgency of the situation, explaining that locals had to travel miles to fetch water from neighbouring wells. The Chairman noted that part of the contractor's payment had been withheld, and that the contract was nearing its end. Mr Callanan confirmed that the contractor had done nothing in twelve months. Mr Hinchin reiterated: "The people have been without water for twelve months." The Secretary was instructed to write again to the Clerk of the Rural District regarding the matter.

The Board next addressed the finances of the Clonakilty Rural District. Mr W. H. Spiller, Clerk of the Rural District, reported that the balance to the credit of the treasurer as of 23rd June was £296 10s 11d. After deducting £166 12s 11d for salaries, the net balance stood at £129 18s 0d. Since then, £149 14s 6d had been received, bringing the prevailing balance to £279 12s 6d. There were 376 labourers' cottages in the district, with a gross annual rental of £1,030. Arrears last year were £177 7s 6d. Mr Spiller added that arrears would likely drop to £50 or £70 by 30th September. Mr D. O'Callaghan commended this, calling it "excellent." Mr Spiller said tenants paid half-yearly, and in March the arrears were £77 16s 3d, but would likely be even lower now. Mr Callanan reminded the Board of its order to insist on more frequent rent collections, arguing that half-yearly payments were burdensome for many poor tenants and that quarterly payments were preferable. Mr Spiller explained that most tenants kept pigs, which they sold the day before the rent collector called. There were rarely large arrears or losses. Mr D. O'Callaghan remarked, "That is West Cork again. Though we are poor, we always pay." Mr Hinchin added, "You get every opportunity of doing so."

Mr Spiller continued, estimating annual water rents at £26 10s, with £10 10s due at the last gale day. Asked about repair estimates for cottages, Mr Spiller said £480 had been set aside, though £350 would be more realistic. The cottages had all been well repaired the previous year. The Chairman inquired about ongoing contracts. Mr Spiller replied that 12-month contracts had been entered into. Their system avoided letting cottages fall into ruin by contracting for annual maintenance. A general specification, like that used for road maintenance, covered all repairs and typically cost around 15/- per cottage. Mr Exham asked if it was calculated on a per-cottage basis. Mr Spiller explained it was based on each rural district, and that year's total was around £350. He offered to send a copy of the contract for all electoral divisions, except one where the contractor refused to sign a bond.

Mr D. O'Callaghan inquired about the number of cottages covered. Mr Spiller confirmed 376 cottages were under contract at 15/- each. Last year saw many special repairs that would not recur. Mr Hinchin pointed out that some cottages might cost £5 to repair, despite the estimated 15/-. He had been informed that some had not received any repairs. Mr Spiller insisted they had all been repaired under a general district contract. A disagreement followed: Mr Hinchin argued people should not be misled into thinking all cottages were repaired for 15/-. Mr Spiller responded that 15/- was the average cost. Mr Hinchin countered that while only two cottages might be repaired in twelve months, others would cost £3 to £5. Mr M. Walsh said the cottages rarely needed repair. The Chairman criticised the system as "penny wise and pound foolish." Mr Spiller defended it, stating the contract method was more effective. Mr D. O'Callaghan considered it a good example to follow, while Mr Hinchin maintained that estimates should reflect actual needs, not blanket averages.

Mr Eamonn Murphy, Clerk of the Kinsale District Council, presented his financial report. The balance on 23rd June was £1,570 10s 7d, with receipts since then totalling £277 8s 2d. The district had 356 labourers' cottages, with a gross annual rental of £902 5s 5d. Arrears on 31st March 1925 were £294

10s 9d. Rents accrued to 31st July 1925 amounted to £292 8s 3d, making a total of £586 14s 0d. Asked about the arrears, Mr Murphy said they were increasing. The Chairman asked what steps were being taken. Mr Murphy replied that the collector was pursuing proceedings against tenants in arrears. £270 12s 2d had been collected by 31st July. Repairs had cost £316 18s 10d. Mr Murphy added that there was only one collector for the entire rural district. Mr D. O'Callaghan asked if many fishermen lived there. Mr Murphy confirmed this. Mr O'Callaghan said this explained the arrears as the fishermen were poor. The Chairman suggested sending down a rent collector, like the individual in Midleton, who was described as being very effective. Mr Daly quipped that Midleton already had enough to manage on its own. Mr Murphy continued: 267 cottages had been repaired to date at a total cost of £1,395 13s 0d, excluding the clerk of works' fee of 10% per contract. The total annual outlay, including loan repayments and interest (£1,796), was £2,206. The cottage-related deficit equated to about 5½d in the £ on a valuation of £56,081. Asked about collection costs, Mr Murphy explained that the collector earned 10% on the first 84 cottages across the first three schemes and 7½% on the remainder. There were 7 or 8 schemes, and the district was divided into two, each with its own clerk of works. Regarding water rents, Mr Murphy reported that for the year ending 31st December 1925, £175 2s 9d was received in advance for Crosshaven waterworks, £17 10s for Carrigaline, and 10/- for Ballinspittle. In Ballinspittle, with a population of about 156, only one house had connected to the water supply as residents had ample water already. Mr D. O'Callaghan noted that despite initially demanding waterworks, the villagers now refused to use them. Mr Murphy admitted it had been a mistake to install them. Mr Callanan said it was a populous area frequented by many visitors. Mr M. Walsh quipped, “It is not to Ballinspittle they come.”

Mr. Murphy reported that as of 31st March 1925, loans outstanding for Crosshaven waterworks amounted to £1,390 1s. 2d. The curator’s salary was £117 per annum. The Chairman pointed out that the people paid £184, yet the system was a continual financial loss. Mr. Murphy said £184

didn't even cover salaries and expenses. Engine and plumbing repairs had cost £15 over the past six months. The maintenance contract was £17 6s. 6d. per quarter—£32 per half-year. Mr. Murphy said Crosshaven residents now wanted a supplemental supply, claiming the prevailing supply was insufficient. Mr. Callanan said Cork City was drawing water from the same source. Mr. Murphy confirmed that Cork City residents were the main consumers.[29]

Another sitting of the Cork County Board of Health, presided over by Chairman, William Broderick, occurred at the end of the month. During the reading of the previous meeting's minutes, Mr. Daniel O'Callaghan disputed a statement by the County Council Secretary, who claimed the Clerk of the Skibbereen Union had not applied for funds. Mr. O'Callaghan asserted he had made two such requests, as confirmed by a letter. He read from the letter until the Chairman interjected, noting the matter concerned the County Council. Mr. Cornelius O'Callaghan suggested postponing the issue until the Secretary was present. Daniel O'Callaghan replied that he raised the matter only to correct any misconception about his credibility, stating that the Clerk had indeed applied, and no response was received. The matter was then adjourned.

A deputation comprising Rev. Father Griffin, Dr. Verling (Medical Officer of Health), and Mr. M. Barry, M.C.C., addressed the meeting regarding the urgent need for a water supply in Newmarket. Mr. Barry explained that while the town supported the scheme, some farmers in the district were reluctant to contribute due to financial hardship. The absence of sanitation posed serious health risks—he cited a recent death from typhoid and warned of the potential for an epidemic. Father Griffin emphasised the long-standing demand (20+ years) for clean water. He was building a new school for 220 children, but at that time, there was no reliable water supply. Existing pumps were outdated and the water was questionable in quality. The Chairman acknowledged the importance of the issue, noting that Mr. Hinchin and Mr. Barry would advocate well for the area. When asked, Mr.

[29] *Cork Examiner 20/8/1925*

Barry confirmed they were seeking support from the £135,000 grant. Dr. Verling added that the Local Government Department had sanctioned the scheme two years prior. The estimated cost was £5,200. The Chairman stated they would need to see updated estimates and financial viability before proceeding. They hoped to allocate grant funding, if available, and encouraged local contribution to support the scheme. Mr. Hinchin declared Newmarket's sanitary conditions as the worst he had seen—even worse than Millstreet or Castlemartyr. Dr. Verling noted that sanitation improvements depended first on water supply.

Mr. M. K. Noonan, T.D., attended with a deputation regarding the lack of water in Glanworth and Ballyhooley. He described the hardships faced by schoolchildren and the general population, who relied on water from nearby farms. Mr. Noonan expressed hope that the Board would treat the claim fairly, especially as the area’s farmers were willing to contribute. He added that Fermoy had suffered significantly after the departure of British military forces, and a water scheme could provide much-needed employment. The Chairman said the Board was still awaiting clarity from the Government on the availability of the £135,000 grant. Despite numerous letters and deputations, no answer had been received. He expressed frustration at the lack of Government response, especially since they were expected to help reorganise the country. Mr. Daly stated that the area’s plans had already been submitted to the Local Government Department, and Mr. Noonan confirmed this. The Chairman suggested retrieving the lodged plans and determining the approximate cost. Mr. Noonan estimated £3,000–£4,000, with locals willing to cover one-third of the cost. The Chairman indicated that funding would likely depend on how much the community could contribute, especially since the county would soon also be divided into three separate administrative areas. Mr. Noonan requested a formal inquiry, and the Chairman agreed to write to the Department to request an Inspector.

Mr. Barry raised the urgent need for a cottage hospital in Newmarket. He proposed repurposing the large dispensary building due to the difficulty poor patients face travelling to

Cork, Mallow, or Fermoy. Many died without adequate care. Mr. Hinchin agreed, stating Kanturk was entitled to a hospital under the Joint County Scheme Order. Though the original hospital burned down, the structure remains sound and ideally located with good water and sewerage. The Chairman expressed outrage at the suffering caused by the lack of hospitals and criticised the prevailing healthcare scheme. He cited Youghal's closed hospital as an example of systemic failure. He called for committees to be formed locally to advocate for better health services.

A report by Messrs. O'Flynn and O'Connor (engineers) highlighted the serious issues with the Mogeely and Castlemartyr water supply, mainly due to negligence by the curator, John Gleeson. Ninety percent of the supply was unfiltered river water, unfit for drinking or hygiene. The local committee, chaired by Fr. Flannery, voted to recommend the curator's dismissal and proposed £90 be spent improving the waterworks and £370 on sanitation. Dr. O'Brien, Medical Officer of Health, confirmed the water was unsafe, and the County Analyst's report stated it was not suitable even for washing. The Chairman suggested giving the curator another chance, unless further charges arose.

A letter dated 7 August 1925 from the Minister for Local Government and Public Health acknowledged several water shortages between Fermoy, Kilworth, Glanworth, and Ballyhooley, following a report by the Chief Engineering Inspector, Mr. Nicholas O'Dwyer. The Minister had recommended that the Sanitary Authority investigate and formulate a financial plan before applying for a loan. Mr. Noonan confirmed he had already taken steps and received a similar letter. The Chairman criticised the Government for deflecting responsibility onto local bodies.

In closing, the Chairman reiterated that any locality willing to help itself deserved support. He called for definite Government answers and promised the Board would be as generous as possible with any available grant funding.[30]

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[30] *Cork Examiner 27/8/1925*

In early September 1925, as reported by the '*Irish News*,' at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, during a review of financial returns from local authorities, it was revealed that the town of Dunmanway carried a debt of £45,961 in connection with labourers' cottages. The Clerk of the Local District Council reported that almost three years' worth of rent remained outstanding. He explained that the District Council had previously agreed to allow tenants to occupy the cottages at a rent of one penny per week, on the condition that they undertook necessary repairs themselves. However, this arrangement had severely disrupted rent collection. To date, no repairs had been carried out, and several tenants had refused to pay even the minimal rent requested. Regarding the profile of tenants, the Clerk noted that while some were indeed labourers, others were described as "gentlemen."[31]

During September 1925, the '*Southern Star*' featured an opinion piece pertaining to Labourers' Cottages and Local Government Reform, as expressed by someone labelled "the Irish Farmer." The writer had asserted that the newly elected local government bodies could not do better than to establish small committees composed of practical men of affairs. These committees, they argued, should thoroughly examine the workings of every department of expenditure and report on possible economies. As evidence came to light day after day, the writer maintained that this view was sound. They pointed out that abuses in local government spending were numerous and that the cases already uncovered were likely only a fraction of the total alleged misconduct remaining hidden.

At a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, the writer noted, the Board had decided to investigate the county's liabilities concerning labourers' cottages. A list was produced showing the occupants of cottages rented at ten-pence halfpenny per week in the Cork Rural District. The list, according to the writer, revealed tenants including milk vendors, railway workers, asylum attendants, army men, masons, carpenters, shoemakers, tailors, painters, rate

[31] *Irish News 10/9/1925*

collectors, midwives, and schoolteachers. One Board member, Mr Tim O'Callaghan, was reported as exclaiming, "Men with £800 to £900 a year living in labourers' cottages at ten-pence halfpenny per week!" The Chairman felt it was unfair to the ratepayers that these well-off individuals were occupying cottages at such a nominal rent. As he continued to review the list of tenants, he noted it included various tradespeople and workers who were not the intended recipients of such housing. The writer reported that the Chairman emphasised that while he did not wish to seem harsh, it was unreasonable that cottages intended for genuine labourers were being occupied by people in much better financial positions. He stated that if such practices continued, those responsible could not truly call themselves public representatives. He also argued that better-paid occupants like schoolteachers should be required to pay rents that reflected the value of the properties, and contribute appropriately to public revenue.

The writer asserted that, beyond the injustice to the labouring class for whom the cottages were built, there was a serious failure on the part of officials for allowing this situation to arise. They criticised the morally questionable behaviour of wealthier occupants who imposed the financial burden of maintenance on the ratepayers, despite paying rents that were far too low to cover even basic costs. They pointed out that the prevailing rents were not economically viable; even full payment would often not cover repair expenses and certainly would not contribute enough to repay loans taken out for construction and land purchase. While acknowledging the difficulty of evicting tenants once established, the writer placed more blame on those responsible for setting these arrangements than on the occupants who accepted them. They also insisted that if better-paid individuals like schoolteachers were to continue living in these cottages, the rents must be adjusted and strictly enforced—if necessary, by law—to match the real cost of building and maintaining the houses and the financial ability of the tenants.

The writer urged that the establishment of small committees to find ways to reduce local government expenses should happen without delay. They also called for public

involvement to help uncover the many unclear and wasteful expenditures. They observed that misuse of relief and home help funds was widespread and difficult for auditors to fully investigate. Furthermore, they noted that people tended to give such assistance more willingly to familiar local representatives rather than to outsiders, regardless of the outsiders' qualifications. The writer warned that public representatives must not avoid confronting and revealing these abuses. Otherwise, they predicted, ratepayers should not expect meaningful improvements in the following year, as officials would continue to manipulate budgets to prevent any real scrutiny.

While the writer did not accuse all public officials of dishonesty or negligence, they concluded that too many lacked the resolve needed to prevent the majority of these abuses. They argued that for the benefit of officials, representatives, and ratepayers, a thorough and detailed review of every area of expenditure was essential. Only by doing so, the writer believed, could the country return to normality and live within its financial means.[32]

At the turn of October, as reported by the '*Irish Independent*,' that at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, discussion arose regarding the formation of sub-committees. Mr. Geraghty, Local Government Department Inspector, remarked that County Cork was in a particularly unusual position administratively. Three sub-committees were established, representing North, South, and West Cork, with the respective Clerks of the District Councils appointed as secretaries. It was noted that while Cork County Council had passed a resolution requesting the Ministry to formally divide the county into three separate areas, each with its own health board, no official order had yet been issued to this effect. The proposal under discussion suggested establishing sub-committees in the areas where such boards were being considered. These committees would handle routine administrative tasks, under the oversight of the central County Board of Health. Mr. Geraghty explained that, unlike other counties where all public health duties were handled

[32] *Southern Star 10/9/1925*

solely by the County Council of Cork operated under a dual system—some responsibilities were managed by the Board of Health, while others remained under the authority of a Commissioner. He indicated that the Ministry's intention was to eventually eliminate the role of the Commissioner, transferring all duties to the County Council. To prepare for this eventual transition, the Ministry wished the Council to establish its own administrative structures. Under such a framework, the newly-formed sub-committees could ultimately evolve into fully-fledged local health boards. However, the initiative drew some criticism. Sir John Scott, Mr. Wallace, and Mr. Kelleher expressed scepticism regarding the motives behind the formation of the committees. Mr. Kelleher, in particular, suggested there might be undisclosed motivations driving the effort. He characterised it as a campaign initiated by certain individuals dissatisfied with the Commissioner's administration, who now sought to create new boards to oversee city affairs. Mr. Kelleher concluded that such a scheme was unlikely to succeed.[33]

A meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was convened in November 1925, attended by the following members: William J. Broderick, Michael Walsh, Jeremiah McCarthy, Richard Daly, Patrick O'Donovan, Cornelius O'Callaghan, John Daly (T.D.), E. Goold, and D. Henchin. On the motion of John Daly, seconded by Patrick O'Donovan, William J. Broderick was re-elected Chairman. Upon assuming the chair, Mr. Broderick expressed his sincere gratitude to the members for his re-election, describing it as one of the highest honours that could be bestowed by the County Council. Subsequently, on a motion proposed by John Daly and seconded by Jeremiah McCarthy, Cornelius O'Callaghan was re-elected as Vice-Chairman. In his address of thanks, Mr. O'Callaghan remarked upon the significant volume of work that had arisen since the dissolution of the various Boards of Guardians and District Councils. He acknowledged that while changes were underway, he believed the government had acted correctly in instituting reforms. In particular, he noted that longstanding

[33] *Irish Independent 1/10/1925*

issues—especially those concerning the allocation of labourers' cottages—had only become fully apparent under the new administrative structure. According to Mr. O'Callaghan, more than £1.25 million had been spent in County Cork under the Labourers Acts, and the abuses that had developed over the preceding five to six years were deeply unjust. He had expressed hope that the Board's administration would represent a marked improvement over past efforts. He advocated for the construction of additional cottages, asserting that labourers were in dire need of such. In a brief exchange, he called upon John Daly to help secure the necessary funding, to which Mr. Daly responded affirmatively.

The previously published list of sub-committee personnel was read aloud, and received formal approval. The Board then turned its attention to the scope of powers to be delegated to these sub-committees. A debate ensued over whether the committees should be granted full authority regarding the letting and repair of labourers' cottages. Jeremiah McCarthy proposed, with John Daly seconding, a resolution empowering the sub-committees to deal with urgent matters relating to sanitation, lighting, and water supplies that could not be deferred until a full meeting of the Board. These powers included the authority to let cottages, arrange necessary repairs, determine tenancies, and initiate proceedings for possession recovery when needed. In contrast, Cornelius O'Callaghan, supported by Richard Daly, moved an amendment suggesting that sub-committees should be restricted to the powers already granted under existing legislation.

A poll was taken. Supporting O'Callaghan's amendment were Michael Walsh, Richard Daly, Cornelius O'Callaghan, and E. Goold. Opposing it were Jeremiah McCarthy, Patrick O'Donovan, John Daly, and the Chairman. A question arose regarding D. Henchin's eligibility to vote, given his prior resignation. The Law Agent clarified that the resignation would only take effect at the meeting following its submission to the County Council. Therefore, Henchin remained a voting member, and cast his vote in favour of McCarthy's resolution. With this decisive vote—and the

Chairman indicating he would have supported McCarthy's resolution in any case—the proposal granting broad powers to the sub-committees was adopted.

The Board approved the appointments of Daniel Egan as Clerk and Mr. Flavin as Assistant Clerk to the South Cork Board; Maurice Regan as Clerk and H. Hanley as Assistant Clerk to the North Cork Board; and Mr. Spiller as Clerk with Mr. Mahony as Assistant Clerk. Richard Daly raised a concern about numerous clerks and assistant clerks across the county who were no longer in office. He argued that these individuals should be given first consideration if additional administrative work arose. Mr. O'Callaghan agreed that such workers deserved recognition. Following a suggestion by the Chairman, the Board unanimously agreed that no area should exceed its prevailing annual financial estimate.

The Chairman next addressed the issue of rent collection for labourers' cottages. He reported that the total amount outstanding across the county amounted to £987,000—nearly one million pounds. He noted significant discrepancies in commission rates paid to rent collectors, which ranged from 5% to as high as 20% in certain districts. He also read a list of prevailing tenants in labourers' cottages throughout the county, which included individuals from a wide range of professions: postmen, a printer, civic guards, chauffeurs, a rate-collector, milk vendors, asylum attendants, masons, carpenters, shoemakers, tailors, blacksmiths, painters, schoolteachers, cart owners, small shopkeepers, pig dealers, farmers' sons, egg merchants' sons, booksellers, road contractors, cattle dealers, Irish-language teachers, bank porters, creamery managers, and horse trainers. The Chairman clarified that the Board's objective was not to displace individuals arbitrarily, but to address longstanding abuses in tenancy allocations. Once the system had been reorganised on a sound economic basis, the possibility of constructing additional housing could then be explored. Recommendations were made to the various sub-committees:

- That agricultural labourers remain in their prevailing arrangements; that tradespeople pay economic rents;

- That salaried individuals be charged rents sufficient to yield a surplus for the Council.

It was further recommended that all sub-committees implement a consistent approach to determining the commission payable to rent collectors.[34]

Later in November, it was documented that the first meeting of the newly-elected Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health took place in the Cork County Council Chamber at the Courthouse, Cork city centre. Present at the convening were committee members such as Messrs. Timothy Corcoran, Patrick J. Bradley, E. Carey, Edmond Ahern, Cornelius Buckley, Martin J. Corry, and Brooke W. Brasier. Officials in attendance included Mr. E. Callanan (Secretary to the County Council), Mr. O. Callanan (Assistant Secretary), Mr. Daniel Egan (Secretary to the Committee), Mr. R. Flavin and Mr. J. Hegarty (Assistant Secretaries), Mr. D. J. Mahony (County Analyst), Mr. B. O'Flynn (Engineer), and rent collectors from each district under the Committee's jurisdiction.

The first item of business was the election of a Chairman. On the proposal of Mr. Brasier, seconded by Mr. Bradley, Mr. Timothy Corcoran was unanimously elected to the position. He subsequently took the chair. Following discussion, Mr. Bradley was elected Vice-Chairman, receiving four votes to Mr. Brasier's three.

Mr. Bradley raised a complaint concerning the state of sanitation in Ballincollig, citing the absence of a proper sewerage system. He described sewage flowing along the roads, posing a significant health hazard to residents. He urged that immediate remedial action be taken. In response, the Engineer explained that two sewerage schemes had previously been considered but were deemed financially unviable due to the lack of a natural outlet. A revised scheme had subsequently been developed to connect with the barracks' drainage system, and although this had received military approval, it did not include the desired outlet point.

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[34] *Cork Examiner 5/11/1925*

The Engineer indicated he was at that time seeking approval for the appropriate outlet and hoped this would be secured before the next meeting, allowing a satisfactory scheme to proceed. Mr. Bradley gave notice of his intention to formally propose at the next meeting that the revised scheme be implemented and its cost treated as a Rural District charge.

The County Analyst raised an issue that had fallen under the Committee's jurisdiction as the newly-designated Sanitary Authority. Under revised regulations of the Food and Drugs Act, the use of unauthorised preservatives in milk for human consumption now required investigation. Before any legal proceedings could be initiated, the individual concerned had to be invited to appear before the Sanitary Authority to explain the use of the prohibited substance. Mr. Carey enquired whether a case was at that time pending. The County Analyst confirmed that there was, noting it was only the second such case in the area since 1917. He clarified that the person involved must appear before the Committee to provide an explanation. Mr. Bradley asked whether the substance in question was formalin, and the Analyst confirmed that it was, noting it had been eight years since the last similar complaint. Following a proposal by Mr. Corry, the Committee agreed that the individual in question be formally requested to attend the next meeting to provide an explanation.[35]

By December 1925, the newly-appointed Western Committee of the Cork County Board of Health convened for its first meeting, in the Boardroom of the County Home, Clonakilty. Members present had included Messers. Callaghan J. McCarthy, Daniel O'Callaghan, John Mullins, William Attridge, Frank Mahony, Timothy Sheehy, Patrick O'Donovan, Timothy J. (T.J.) Murphy, T.D., D.L. McCarthy, and Jeremiah McCarthy. Also in attendance were officials including Mr. W.H. Spiller (Secretary), Mr. J. O'Mahony and Mr. P. Byrne (Assistant Secretaries), Mr. P.W. O'Donovan (Law Agent), and Mr. J.J. O'Crowley (Engineer). Mr. Sheehy proposed that Mr. Callaghan J. McCarthy be elected Chairman, praising his proven administrative abilities within

[35] *Cork Examiner 26/11/1925*

the County Council. Mr. O'Callaghan seconded this, asserting that Mr. McCarthy's public service was well respected across the county. The motion passed unanimously, and Mr. McCarthy took the chair, expressing his intention to serve the interests of all parties under the Committee's remit. Mr. Sheehy was then unanimously appointed Vice-Chairman on the motion of Mr. O'Callaghan, seconded by Mr. Mullins and supported by Mr. Murphy. Mr. Sheehy conveyed his gratitude upon election.

During discussion on the administration of cottage insurance, Mr. McCarthy noted that Clonakilty had effectively operated its own insurance system, unlike most districts which relied on external providers. He recommended extending this in-house model to the six districts under the Committee's oversight. This suggestion, put forward formally by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mr. O'Callaghan, was unanimously adopted. Concerns were raised by Mr. Mullins regarding the treatment of patients from Castletownbere, which lay approximately 80 miles from Clonakilty. He cited a case where a fever patient had died during the lengthy journey to the Central Home. Mr. Mullins insisted the local hospital in Castletownbere, which was at that time occupied by National troops, should be made available for civilian medical care. Mr. Sheehy agreed, calling the prevailing arrangement a grave injustice to the local population. He maintained that soldiers could be accommodated in huts elsewhere, while the hospital resumed its intended function. Mr. O'Mahony acknowledged the logistical challenges Castletownbere faced due to its distance from Clonakilty. The Secretary noted a cottage hospital was planned for Bantry, with one potentially to follow in Castletownbere. Nevertheless, Mr. Mullins stated that Bantry was still too far for emergency care. On Mr. Sheehy's motion, being seconded by Mr. O'Mahony, the Committee resolved to request the Local Government Department to arrange for the hospital's evacuation by military forces, so it could serve its original purpose pending the establishment of a dedicated facility.

The Committee reviewed a report from Engineer Mr. O'Crowley regarding cottages, wells, and water supply in the Clonakilty area. The Chairman and several members,

including Mr. Sheehy and Mr. O'Callaghan, commended Mr. O'Crowley's diligence and competence. The Secretary reported that cottage rent arrears had been significantly reduced from £27, to under £10. Despite this improvement, the Local Government Department continued to demand clarification on how the remaining balance would be addressed. Mr. Murphy commented that if the Department managed its affairs as well as the Clonakilty area had, it would be performing much better. Mr. O'Mahony also praised the area's performance. The Committee agreed to inform the Department that they were entirely satisfied with rent collection efforts in Clonakilty.

Mr. Murphy referenced a report by Dr. Twomey, indicating that two typhus cases from Dunmanway had been transferred to the Cork Fever Hospital (Cork City). He suggested this warranted an inspection of the district, hinting at deeper sanitary or health issues. The Committee agreed to request an investigation by the Local Government's medical inspector. Mr. Murphy also gave notice of his intent to propose, at the next meeting, the appointment of a qualified engineer to West Cork to oversee repairs to labourers' cottages, and the employment of local clerks of works as required. The motion was well supported by Mr. O'Mahony, Mr. Mullins, Mr. D.L. McCarthy, and Mr. O'Donovan, and it was passed unanimously.

Mr. O'Callaghan also raised procedural concerns about overlapping committee duties. He produced two notices—one requesting his attendance at Clonakilty, and the other summoning him to Cork City at the same time. He implied that the Secretary, Mr. Callanan, acted with excessive autonomy in issuing such conflicting directives. The Chairman responded lightly, suggesting Mr. O'Callaghan might be overcommitted. Mr. Murphy reported similar scheduling conflicts. Mr. O'Mahony defended the Secretary's actions, stating that he was fulfilling his duties. Mr. F. McCarthy cautioned that such criticisms were inappropriate during the meeting at hand. The Chairman concluded that since both committees had met simultaneously, dual notices had been issued to members of both bodies.

Finally, Mr. Murphy recommended that at the next meeting, the Committee be furnished with a full financial statement from each local authority it was succeeding. He argued that a clear understanding of each area's fiscal position was essential to responsible governance. The Committee agreed to the proposal.[36]

Also that month, it was reported that significant progress was made at the recent meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, held at the Courthouse under the chairmanship of Mr. T. Corcoran. The meeting addressed key infrastructural and housing concerns in rural districts, including Ballincollig, Coachford, Ballingeary, and Midleton. A long-awaited sewerage scheme for the village of Ballincollig was given the green light. Mr. P. J. Bradley proposed the scheme, estimated to cost £1,640, with the cost charged to the Rural District of Cork. The motion was supported by Rev. Wm. Desmond, P.P., who emphasised the health benefits and employment opportunities it would bring. Mr. Bradley noted the final cost may be lower than estimated, and suggested the scheme be funded by a loan repayable over several years, reducing the burden on ratepayers to approximately ½d in the £ annually. The motion was seconded by Mr. Buckley and passed without opposition. The scheme is to be financed through a loan.

Representatives from Coachford, including Rev. T. Sheehan, C.C., and Rev. K. J. Alford, attended in support of a proposal by Mr. Bradley for a water supply and sewerage system for the village. However, Mr. B. O'Flynn, engineer to the Board, found the proposed drainage plan unfeasible and the water supply insufficient. Mr. O'Flynn recommended developing a smaller, interim scheme to address immediate needs. The committee agreed to send him to the village to develop a more economical proposal for consideration at the next meeting.

Mr. Edmond Goold proposed, seconded by Mr. Carey, that steps be taken to provide a water supply to Ballingeary, with costs borne by the Macroom Rural District. Rev. S. Lynch,

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[36] *Southern Star 5/12/1925*

C.C., spoke to the dire conditions in the village, stating urgent action was required. Engineer Mr. O'Flynn had reviewed the existing proposals, made minor changes, and approved them. The combined cost of the water and drainage schemes was estimated at £3,060. A report from Dr. P. P. Goold, the Medical Officer for Inchigeela, highlighted significant public health risks, including a defective pump and widespread insanitary conditions. The committee resolved to request government funding to implement the proposed works.

The committee considered the need for a Clerk of Works to oversee 567 cottages in the Midleton Rural District. Mr. Carey proposed the appointment of a dedicated officer, seconded by Mr. Brasier. Mr. Donoghue suggested instead that the role be amalgamated with those in nearby Cork or Youghal districts, with a £1 weekly salary increase to cover the additional duties. The proposal was defeated by 4 votes to 2. The committee resolved to advertise the post for a Clerk of Works specifically for the Midleton area.

To reduce maintenance costs and ensure regular upkeep, the committee approved a proposal by Mr. Brasier (seconded by Mr. Bradley) to supply paint to tenants willing to carry out painting of their cottages by themselves, based on recommendations from the Clerk of Works. A dispute arose regarding a cottage in Knocknastrickeen, Cloyne district, occupied without legal authorisation by an individual and his family. The committee, led by Mr. Brasier, insisted on enforcing legal tenancy, arguing that unlawful occupation could not be tolerated. Mr. Corry defended the person, calling the move "spiteful," but his amendment to retain him as tenant was defeated. By majority vote, Thomas Daly was appointed the legal tenant. The committee reviewed substantial arrears in cottage rents across the Midleton (No. 2) and Macroom districts, with individual debts ranging from £1 10s to £13 18s. Notices to quit were approved in several cases of persistent non-payment, though the committee showed leniency where tenants had made good faith efforts or demonstrated hardship. In one case, a tenant with nine children was unable to secure employment. The committee deferred action and agreed to ask the County Surveyor to

consider the man for road work. Chairman Mr. Corcoran warned tenants that unless arrears were paid off promptly, the committee would have no choice but to take decisive action, including evictions where necessary.[37]

At a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health in January 1926, presided over by Mr. W. J. Broderick, concerns were raised regarding the administration of labourers' cottages in the Dunmanway Rural District. The West Cork Sub-Committee recommended that several officers not be transferred pending a sworn inquiry into what was described as serious irregularities in the management of cottages and rent collections. The officers in question included Mr. Florence J. Crowley (Clerk, Dunmanway Rural Council), Mr. Cornelius O'Sullivan (Sanitary Officer), Mr. Timothy Sullivan (Sanitary Sub-Officer), and Ms. Catherine McCarthy (Sanitary Sub-Officer).

T. J. Murphy, T.D. M.C.C, present at the meeting, stated that the sub-committee had identified multiple grounds for concern. These included:

- Irregular Tenancy Practices: Individuals were listed as tenants who had never signed the required agreements and were therefore not legally entitled to occupy the cottages.
- Inefficient Rent Collection: Rent collection was described as poor, with substantial arrears.
- Neglect of Duties: Officers were accused of failing to perform their responsibilities, and receiving bonuses and salaries out of proportion to their actual performance.

Given the scale of the alleged mismanagement, a sworn inquiry was deemed necessary by the sub-committee. It was also recommended that the named officers not be transferred while the investigation is pending.

The Secretary read from the minutes of the West Cork Sub-Committee, outlining the following:

Catherine McCarthy's Collection Area:

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[37] *Cork Examiner 18/12/1925*

- Total arrears: £336 4s 3d
- One cottage in Gaulacullen had been vacant since 1920.
- Another cottage in Derragh had never been completed; the tenant paid no rent.
- A cottage in Milane was destroyed, and another in Clashnacroona was occupied rent-free due to needed repairs.

Cornelius O'Sullivan's Area:

- Total arrears: £1,624 4s 2d
- Seven cottages were vacant.
- Some cottages, including those in Farrahineeney and Barundivane, were in ruins.

Timothy Sullivan's Area:

- Total arrears: £1,167 16s 8d
- One cottage in Ballyvelone had been vacant since 1918 and was being used as a fowl house.
- Two cottages in Droumfea had been unoccupied since 1908 and 1911, with only their walls and roofs remaining. One of these was being used to house livestock.

The cottages across all areas were generally reported to be in poor condition. Legal proceedings were ordered to recover possession of two cottages: one in Curradrinagh, held by William Cotter, and another in Cushduve, occupied by Michael Manahan, both of whom were alleged to be holding the properties illegally.[38]

In March 1926, another meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held in the Council Chamber at the Courthouse, about half an hour later than scheduled. Mr. Timothy Corcoran (Chairman) presided. Also present were Messrs. Brooks W. Brazier, Edmond Carey, Edmond Aherne, Jeremiah O'Sullivan, Patrick J. Bradley, Cornelius Buckley, Edmond Goold, and Patrick J. O'Donoghue.

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[38] *Evening Echo 11/1/1926*

A meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held in the Council Chamber at the Courthouse a few days later, about half an hour later than scheduled. Mr. Timothy Corcoran (Chairman) presided. Also present were Messrs. Brooke W. Brazier, Edmond Carey, E. Aherne, Jeremiah O'Sullivan, Patrick J. Bradley, Cornelius Buckley, Edmond Goold, and Patrick J. O'Donoghue. Mr. Brazier reported that he had received letters stating that the pump at Rostellan was out of order, and that a sewerage drain at Lower Aghada was in poor condition. It was agreed to refer these matters to the engineer. On the motion of Mr. Brazier, it was decided that arrangements be made to erect a pump at Garryvoe Beach by May of that year.

Mr. Aherne moved and Mr. O'Sullivan seconded a motion requesting that the Minister for Local Government and Public Health approve the permanent appointment of Mr. J. M. Regan as sanitary sub-officer and cottage rent collector. Mr. Bradley praised Mr. Regan's performance, stating he deserved a permanent position. The motion was adopted. Mr. Aherne proposed advertising for a solicitor, asking candidates to state their expected salary. The Chairman noted that the Board of Health was already addressing the matter. Mr. Bradley expressed that the general feeling was that solicitors should be employed as needed. The motion was postponed.

Mr. Goold moved that Mrs. Mary Lynch, acting clerk at Macroom Rural Council, be appointed to check the rent collectors' books in the southern area at her prevailing salary. Mr. Aherne seconded. While some, including Mr. Carey, questioned the cost (£209 p.a.), others argued it was necessary. Mr. Bradley proposed it be made a condition that no travelling expenses be paid. It was agreed to appoint Mrs. Lynch at her present salary, inclusive of any travel expenses. Mr. O'Sullivan expressed hope that suitable employment would be found for Mr. Murphy, the former clerk of Kinsale Rural Council. The Chairman supported this sentiment and assured the committee would assist him.

On the motion of Mr. O'Donoghue, seconded by Mr. Goold, it was agreed to adopt a scheme by engineer Mr. O'Flynn for the improvement of Coachford village's water supply (£141 estimated cost) and drainage (£120). The area of charge would be the rural district of Macroom. Mr. O'Donoghue reported the collapse of the wall at Adrigole graveyard, noting that a cow had fallen into a tomb as a result. The matter was referred to the engineer for urgent attention.

A discussion arose concerning the previous appointment of Mr. Simon Twomey as clerk of works for the Midleton rural district. Despite offering a higher tender (£2 10s per week), he had been chosen over Mr. Denis O'Brien (£1 13s 6d), due to greater experience and engineer's recommendation. The County Board of Health had refused to sanction the appointment. The committee reaffirmed their original decision, defending it as being in the best interest of the work. A deputation from Douglas protested the proposal to leave a sewage tank uncovered following damage from an explosion. The engineer defended the plan, citing successful examples of similar open tanks elsewhere without health issues. The Chairman stated that the committee trusted the engineer and medical officer to act responsibly. A list of residents not connected to the main sewer would be compiled, and a proposal to sink a well was deferred pending further reports.

Regarding the matter of the Rent Collector for the Youghal No. 1 district, Mr. Corry moved that the position be declared vacant and advertised, alleging Mr. Justin Condon was not performing the role himself but paying another to do so, despite holding multiple other posts. The motion was seconded by Mr. O'Donoghue but was defeated by 8 votes to 2. Mr. Corry proposed standardising rent collector remuneration at 7.5%. Prevailing rates varied: Midleton (7%), Youghal (10%), Kinsale (5–10%), Macroom (same), Bandon (7.5–15%), and Cork (10%). The motion was again defeated 6 votes to 2, with two abstentions.

Dealing with the 'War Bonus,' Mr. Corry moved, and Mr. O'Sullivan seconded, that all war bonuses cease from 1 January 1926 and that salaries of transferred officers be

fixed. Mr. Buckley opposed, noting no officers had yet been transferred. Mr. Bradley and Mr. Brazier argued that officials had either received salary increases or bonuses, and should be treated fairly. No final resolution was reached.[39]

Later that month, a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the Washington St. Courthouse (Cork City centre), with Mr. P. J. Bradley presiding as Vice-Chairman. Among those in attendance were J. Sullivan, Edward Carey, Martin J. Corry, Cornelius Buckley, and Edmond Aherne. The first item on the agenda concerned the future of officers from the former Rural District Councils. The Committee was tasked with selecting which of these officers should be transferred to the new County Board of Health. However, the Chairman advised postponing any decisions on this matter, noting that the Committee was still, at that time, a temporary body and that permanent Boards of Health would not be appointed until the March of that year. He felt such significant decisions should be deferred until a permanent structure was in place.

Attention then turned to a motion introduced by Mr. Buckley, who urged that the clerical staff at that time employed in the Secretary's Office be transferred to the County Board of Health. He argued that their services were still needed, and that hiring a new team would require additional resources and office space. Buckley pointed out that these clerks had always handled the work of the Board of Health, and without the transfer, they would remain solely under the Board of Public Assistance but still be entitled to pensions based on salaries formerly paid by the now-dissolved Rural District Councils. It was agreed that the Committee's Secretary would attend an upcoming conference at the Department of Local Government to discuss issues relating to the reorganisation of public bodies and relevant legislative orders.

Two tenders were submitted for the construction of a concrete channel at Fair Hill. The lower bid, submitted by Pat Spillane of Castle Street, was accepted. A request from

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[39] *Cork Examiner 14/1/1926*

residents of the Rochestown District for a better and more accessible water supply was referred to the County Engineer for assessment and report. The Committee accepted the resignation of Mr. Patrick Lucey, Sanitary Sub-Officer in the Macroom District, and referred the matter of his retirement to the main Board of Health. Mr. Corry submitted a proposal, suggesting that no official should be eligible for transfer to the Board if they or their spouses owned agricultural land with a rateable valuation exceeding £30. Meanwhile, Mr. Sullivan gave notice of his intention to nominate Edward Murphy, former Clerk of the Kinsale Rural District Council, and Denis Lordan, former Assistant Clerk of the Bandon Rural District Council, for employment within the new Board of Health offices.

The issue of a damaged sewage tank in Douglas prompted serious concern. Dr. J. Lynch, the district's Medical Officer, reported that the tank posed a clear health hazard. He warned that if left uncovered, it would almost certainly become a breeding ground for disease, particularly during the warmer months. In contrast, the County Engineer maintained that such tanks, including similar ones in the Cork Workhouse, had operated uncovered for decades without incident. The Secretary supported this view, noting that no complaints had ever been made regarding those tanks. Mr. Corry observed that their professional advisors were in clear disagreement on the matter. A letter from Mr. D. Healy, representing a public meeting of 40 to 50 men from Douglas, was read aloud. The group expressed strong opposition to the decision to leave the tank uncovered, fearing it would harm public health. They called on Dr. Lynch to advocate for it to be enclosed, as it had been previously. Following this, the Committee agreed that the Engineer and Medical Officer should meet, review the situation, and submit a joint report at the next meeting. Mr. Carey proposed that a sewerage scheme for the Midleton Home be included in the upcoming 1926–27 budget estimates. He argued that the people of the area, having contributed substantially to Poor Law administration, deserved a proper sanitary system, particularly as the Midleton Home had effectively become a permanent institution. His proposal was seconded by Mr. Aherne and approved by the Committee.

Housing development was also discussed. Mr. B. O'Meara, solicitor, appeared on behalf of a client interested in acquiring two and a half acres of land at Crab Lane to build 24 or 25 houses for ex-servicemen. He raised concerns about the cost of connecting the homes to a sewer on Boreenmanna Road, suggesting that extending the main sewer from Blackrock Road would be more economical. The Chairman acknowledged the importance of the proposed development and expressed support, but recommended awaiting a report from the Engineer before making a final decision. This was agreed.

Reports from Dairy Inspectors showed that inspections had been carried out across local dairies and cowsheds. The facilities were found to be in satisfactory condition, and the Chairman had remarked that the reports reflected the Committee's commitment to ensuring a clean and safe milk supply.

A further matter raised by Mr. Corry concerned a labourer named O'Brien from Belgooly, who had been served with a notice to quit, despite having a rent receipt. The Secretary clarified that the rent had been paid only after the notice was issued. Mr. Carey explained that the tenant was often away working in various locations, and only occasionally stayed in the cottage. There were complaints about the condition of the property, including water ingress and difficulty lighting fires. The Chairman expressed concern that houses were being left vacant while families in need remained unhoused, describing the situation as unacceptable.[40]

At the turn of February, Mr. J. M. O'Connor chaired the meeting of the Northern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health held today at Mallow. Present were Messrs. J. Harrett, W. J. Philpott, J. McCarthy, J. Daly T.D., J. S. Russell, J. Barry, B. Sullivan (solicitor), and P. H. Barry. Officials included the Secretary, Mr. M. O'Regan; solicitor J. J. Dudley; County Engineer D. J. Buckley; Clerks P. Coughlan and J. Linchan. The Committee unanimously

[40] *Cork Examiner 21/1/1926*

recommended that Mr. Pomeroy from Millstreet be appointed as Inspector for the Millstreet Rural District. The Secretary raised the issue of monitoring rent and rate collections but it was decided to defer this matter for future consideration.

Regarding the preparation of the new rate estimates, the Secretary explained that the Board of Health, rather than the individual Committees, would be responsible for preparing the estimates. He was instructed to provide the Board with the necessary figures for the North Cork area. Mr. T. J. Golden, solicitor from Mallow, appeared on behalf of an unsuccessful applicant for a cottage in the district, arguing that his client was better qualified than the man who had been appointed, who was not a ‘bona fide’ labourer. After discussion, Mr. Barry indicated he would submit a motion to reconsider the tenant’s appointment.

The matter of providing a water supply to Cahirnee was referred to the district Engineer for a detailed report. Regarding Buttevant Barracks, the Committee discussed the proposal to take over the military barracks' married quarters and convert them into labourers’ cottages. Mr. C. Robinson, Chief Valuer from the Board of Works, explained that there were fifty houses available. The Board proposed leasing them to the Committee at £300 per annum on a five-year lease, with the Committee responsible for repairs and granted the first year rent-free. The expected net revenue after repairs and management costs was estimated at £260. At that time, 26 houses were occupied by tenants who had not been officially assigned by the Board of Works. The Committee would need to charge rents ranging from 5 shillings to 5 shillings and 3 pence, depending on house size. The Chairman expressed concern that these rents were very high. Mr. Barry noted that earlier prospects, such as a proposed beet factory, had raised hopes for the area, but with those plans abandoned, the locality was very poor. Mr. Robinson responded that rents had to be set to avoid losses for both the state and the County Council. Mr. Daly proposed that the Committee offer to take over the houses at a sum that would allow letting them at one shilling per week, matching typical labourers’ cottage rents. This proposal was seconded by Mr. Barrett. Mr. Barry suggested the houses should be handed

over free of charge due to lost water rates previously paid by the barracks. Mr. Robinson rejected this idea. The Chairman asked if Mr. Robinson was aware of the terms under which parts of the Tipperary barracks had been taken over by the local council for comparison purposes. Mr. Robinson said he was not directly involved but would investigate. The Chairman then proposed an amendment to adjourn the matter until a sub-committee, including Mr. Robinson and Mr. Coughlan, inspected the houses. This was seconded by Mr. Sullivan and agreed by the Committee. The sub-committee would submit a report at the next meeting.

The Committee also received a letter from Mr. C. Ferris, American Consul at Cove (Cobh), responding to a request for health statistics. Mr. Ferris explained that he sought data on disease cases and deaths, especially concerning contagious diseases such as typhus, typhoid, and diphtheria, to inform U.S. public health officials. He noted such requests should be addressed to the Registrar General but assured that any information the Secretary could provide would be supplied. Concerning water supplies, the Secretary reported that plans and estimates for water extension and pipe improvements at Mitchelstown had been sent to the Ministry for approval. Mr. Russell moved to improve the water supplies at Kildorrery and Ballindangan, with estimated costs of £1,100 and £710 respectively. It was mentioned that Mr. Daly was negotiating with the Board of Education for a grant towards the Kildorrery area work. The Committee decided to defer consideration of these proposals. Mr. Daly also raised water supply issues at Clondulane and Watergrasshill, noting that in the absence of the Engineer, these matters would require further consideration. Regarding the lack of water supply to the upper part of Castletownroche village, it was noted that a report would be presented at the next meeting.[41]

A few days later, at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, held at the Courthouse, Mr. William J. Broderick presided as Chairman. Also present were Capt. Collins, Messrs. John Daly T.D., Con O'Callaghan, M. Welsh (Bandon), Richard Daly, Patrick O'Donovan, and Edmond

[41] *Evening Echo 1/2/1926*

Goold. The Secretary read a letter from the Very Rev. T. Canon Barrett, P.P. of St. Finbarr's West Parish, who raised a concern about a man named Fitzgerald living in one of the model cottages at Bishoptown. Fitzgerald had built an attached dancing room to his house and was advertising dances three nights a week, including an all-night dance on 30th of the previous month. The letter highlighted that the Bishops of Ireland had issued a solemn warning against such dancing rooms due to their negative moral impact, and that a circular had been sent to every parish to address this issue regularly. Canon Barrett believed Fitzgerald had no legal right to construct such a room and urged the Board to take steps to have it removed. Capt. Collins recalled a similar situation in Monkstown, where a tenant had no right to use a cottage for purposes other than residential, and enforcement had successfully prevented misuse. The Secretary confirmed that Fitzgerald's cottage was intended as a labourer's dwelling and was not to be used for other purposes. Mr. Daly expressed a contrary view, saying he saw no harm in dancing and remarked that dancing was widespread throughout the country. However, Capt. Collins insisted that when a complaint came from the person responsible for local morals, it must be treated seriously and addressed according to the law. Mr. R. Daly added that the main complaint was about the late hours at which these dances were held. The Chairman pointed out that Fitzgerald was actually a shopkeeper, which was inappropriate for a labourer's cottage. The Secretary stated that the Department was determined the Board should evict tenants misusing cottages by running shops, garages, or similar businesses. The prevailing case was a clear violation of the tenant's rights, as Fitzgerald had no right to operate a dance hall or shop from the premises. Mr. Daly asked whether the criticism was because Fitzgerald was poor, to which the Secretary replied that Fitzgerald was not poor, but practically a millionaire. Mr. R. Daly proposed, and Capt. Collins seconded, a motion that the tenant be formally notified to stop the misuse immediately, or face termination of his tenancy. The motion was agreed.

The Secretary then addressed the need to prepare the estimates and demands the Board would make on the County Council for the coming financial year. However, he had not

yet received the necessary expenditure details from the clerks of the three subcommittees. Mr. O'Callaghan asked if the estimates for roads had been received from the County Council, which the Secretary confirmed had not. The County Council expected a special meeting of the Board to be called to decide on the rates, but this could not happen without full expenditure details. The Chairman noted that the secretaries of the subcommittees had been transferred to the County Council, but the Council had not yet transferred them properly to the Board of Health. The Secretary pointed out that the Board had appointed these secretaries, but the Chairman maintained they were only Council officers until officially transferred. Mr. Daly asked if the Local Government Department had sanctioned the appointments, to which the Secretary confirmed they had. Despite some discussion, no action was taken on this issue. Rev. P. Desmond, P.P. of Ballincollig, attended the meeting with several local residents to support the Southern Committee's recommendation for a proper sewerage scheme for the village. He emphasised the absolute necessity of the scheme, noting that the old Rural Council had unanimously agreed on its importance after repeated recommendations from the medical officer. The Chairman responded that the question was not whether the scheme was needed, but whether local residents were willing to bear the financial cost. At that time, annual expenses for the existing system ranged between £60 and £100, and it was possible the community might prefer to improve the existing system rather than build a new one. In response to Mr. O'Callaghan, the district Engineer, Mr. O'Flynn, explained that the prevailing system cost about £82 per year to operate. The estimated cost for the new sewerage scheme was £1,040, with running costs of approximately £30 annually.[42]

Also that month, at the Courthouse in Cork city centre, a conference was held involving representatives from the County Insurance Committee, County Borough (City) Insurance Committee, Cork Joint Hospital Board, Cork County Board of Health, and the City Commissioner, Mr. P. Monahan. The purpose of the meeting was to consider the

[42] *Evening Echo 8/2/1926*

advisability of drafting a scheme under the Tuberculosis Act. Mr. William J. Broderick, Chairman of the Cork County Board of Health, presided. Those in attendance included Dr. Boyd Barrett from the Local Government Department, Mr. Monahan, Cork City Commissioner, John Daly T.D., T.J. Murphy T.D., C. O'Callaghan M.C.C., R. Daly, Edmond Gould, M. Walsh, Capt. Collins H.C., T. Bradley, Martin. J. Corry, Dr. Magner, C. Bailey, Tim Quill, C. Buckley, P. Harold Barry, L. F. Owens, Mrs. Murphy O'Connor, Mrs. Marie Lynch, Miss O'Mahony, Mrs. Chas. Daly, Miss O'Brien, W. L. Kelleher, J. Fitzgibbon, George Daly B.L., Dr. Ahern R.M.S. from Doneraile Sanatorium, P. H. Meade, J. O'Mullane, E. J. Murphy, J. F. Corkery, T. O'Leary, J. Fitzpatrick, and J. McAuliffe.

Mr. Callanan, the Secretary, explained that the meeting had been convened to restart efforts toward a joint city and county scheme for the treatment of tuberculosis. At the time of the Insurance Act's passage, a sum of £150,000 had been set aside for tuberculosis treatment, with Cork's share amounting to £14,000. Cork had taken a leading role in establishing sanatoria, but due to a technicality, it was excluded from the benefits of the Act. The government had later agreed to provide the money if the County Council prepared a scheme. However, due to the outbreak of war, the scheme was never completed. The prevailing objective was to resume from where matters had been left and secure a financial contribution toward future treatment. A penny in the pound rate would raise £10,000, with £5,000 provided by the government and the remainder from the local rates. Dr. Magner questioned the accuracy of the £150,000 figure, but Mr. Exham, the Law Adviser, confirmed that £111,000 had been earmarked for Cork. Mr. P. H. Barry suggested they move forward with drafting a scheme. Mr. Corry, while usually in favour of economy, felt this was not a case where strict savings were advisable. Mrs. Lynch also supported establishing a scheme, expressing confidence that the penny rate would suffice to cover costs. She referenced the long-standing discussions at national meetings regarding adoption of the Tuberculosis Act by Cork, and read a letter from the Local Government Board dated 13 October 1922. The letter urged the County Council to take immediate measures to

deal with tuberculosis, expressing hope that the Insurance Committee would influence the Council to act swiftly.

Dr. Boyd Barrett, a medical inspector from the Local Government Department, welcomed the initiative. He believed that any previous inaction had been due to misunderstandings. With a scheme, Cork would immediately gain access to the £14,000 grant. He observed that patients from outside Cork also benefited from Cork's sanatorium, and that if a formal scheme were in place, other counties would have to look after their own cases. Dr. Barrett shared his observations from visits to Switzerland and Belgium, noting that Ireland focused more on treating advanced cases. He believed a broader focus on advanced treatment could significantly reduce the prevalence of tuberculosis over the next 10 to 20 years. There were, he said, existing institutions in the county and city suitable for adapting to treat advanced and surgical cases. When asked for figures on tuberculosis mortality, Dr. Barrett reported a 60% decrease over the past 25 years. Dr. Ahern of Heatherside noted that deaths in 1922 were 31% lower than in 1915, and 23% lower than the average from 1912 to 1921. There were about 40 fewer tuberculosis-related deaths per week in 1922 compared to 1917, with approximately 6,000 fewer people suffering from tuberculosis in Cork in 1922 compared to 1917.

Mr. Bradley inquired whether or not the adoption of a scheme would immediately release the £14,000, and Dr. Barrett confirmed that it would. Dr. Magner expressed concern that the present committee lacked the expertise to draft an effective scheme and recommended forming a specialist committee. Mr. O'Callaghan joked that experts always disagreed. Dr. Magner argued Cork was entitled to more than £14,000, perhaps £20,000, and noted that the government had never explained how it had calculated the original figure. He recalled previously drafting a scheme that was approved by various bodies and the medical profession, but never presented to the County Council. The Secretary interjected, accusing Dr. Magner of later blocking the scheme because his son was not appointed as tuberculosis officer, which led to a heated exchange that the Chairman attempted to defuse. Mr. Callanan clarified that the prevailing scheme

was the one initially drafted by Dr. Cotter, Mr. Exham, and himself. The County Council had been willing to adopt it, but only if the Stream Hill Sanatorium was transferred. The Joint Hospital Board refused, and the matter stalled. Mr. Geo. Daly B.L. stressed the urgent need for improved tuberculosis treatment in both city and county. A prior scheme to treat city cases cost £900 annually but had never materialised. However, the government was now committed to providing the £14,000. Daly argued that any new scheme must provide for post-sanatorium care, as discharged patients often returned to poor housing conditions, reinfecting others. He said prevailing accommodation was only available for eight city cases.

The Chairman stated that any new scheme should integrate the existing sanatorium and utilise both the £14,000 grant and the penny rate. Mr. Barry emphasised that Dr. Barrett had confirmed the scheme could work within the penny rate and suggested forming a committee with medical input to draft it. City Commissioner Monahan said he had expected the meeting to build public support for a tuberculosis treatment scheme. He noted that the County Council had refused to draft a scheme and instead demanded the funds unconditionally. The government insisted a scheme must come first. He supported co-operation between city and county, suggesting two tuberculosis officers and shared nursing and dispensary resources. Monahan did not want to restrict spending to the penny rate, as proper treatment would prevent future burdens on the rates. He stressed that effective treatment for advanced cases would be a sound investment. The Chairman clarified that the County Council had not refused to act but had been constrained by financial pressure. Mr. Exham asked about the future of the sanatorium under a new scheme, and the Chairman confirmed it would be included. Dr. Barrett agreed this could be arranged and noted that collaboration between city and county could reduce costs.

After further discussion, Mr. George Daly B.L. proposed, and Mr. P. Harold Barry also seconded, a resolution recommending the County Council and Corporation adopt the 1908 Act. This was on the condition that the financial

liability of each body be capped at a penny in the pound, and that the government release the £14,000 grant and commit to further funding for the city and county scheme. Given the situation with the Joint Hospital Board, the resolution had also recommended that government experts formulate a scheme for prompt review by the relevant authorities. The Chairman proposed that each body involved—the County Council, the Corporation, the County Insurance Committee, the County Borough Insurance Committee, and the Joint Hospital Board—appoint three representatives to form a committee to work with the draft scheme when it arrived from Dublin. This was agreed. On Mr. Barry's suggestion, and noting Dr. Barrett's statement that a scheme would be ready within a fortnight, it was further agreed that the committee would consult with representatives from the medical profession during the process.[43]

The following week, at a meeting of the North Cork Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, held in Mallow, Mr. John Cronin (Chairman) presided. Among those present were Mr. John Daly, T.D.; Mr. John Barry; Mr. McCarthy from Millstreet; Mr. James S. Russell; Mr. Philpott; Mr. J. M. O'Connor; and others. A letter from Colonel Grove White, M.C., was read and ordered to be inserted into the minutes, in which he thanked the committee for its vote of condolence on the recent death of his wife. Mr. J. Barry then moved that Mr. P. H. McCarthy, C.E., of Dublin, be appointed by the Board to report to the Local Government Department on the feasibility of securing a water supply for Charleville. Mr. Barry stated that he had recently met with Mr. McCarron and several other Local Government officials to discuss ongoing grievances in Charleville concerning water, housing, and sanitation. He suggested the Chairman could confirm these issues, particularly as he himself had received numerous letters highlighting such concerns. The Chairman, however, responded firmly, saying: "Don't ask me to agree with the letter you laid before the Poor Law Commission in Cork, because its contents were neither true in substance nor in fact."

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[43] *Cork Examiner 9/2/1926*

In reply, Mr. Barry maintained that, regardless of the letter's accuracy, it had been read by the medical officer of health responsible for the district. During an interview with Mr. McCarron, he had submitted a memorial signed by prominent figures, including the Very Rev. Canon Roche, P.P.; Rev. Fr. Burke; Rev. Fr. Whelan; Rev. Mother Francis of the Convent of Mercy; Dr. Wallace; Dr. O'Donnell; Dr. Hartigan; and the majority of Charleville residents. The memorial outlined the town's insanitary conditions and appealed for urgent remedies in the interest of public health. Mr. Barry emphasised that Charleville found itself in a particularly unfortunate position due to its removal from the Union under the scheme of amalgamation with Kilmallock Union, and that it subsequently required special attention. He had commended Mr. McCarron for receiving them courteously, and for listening attentively to their grievances.[44]

In late February, at a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, held in the Council Chamber at Cork Courthouse, Mr. T. Corcoran presided. Also present were Messrs. C. Buckley, P. J. O'Donoghue, E. Goold, and J. O'Sullivan. Before proceeding with the agenda, Mr. Buckley proposed that the committee express its sympathy to their colleague, Mr. P. J. Bradley, M.C.C., on the recent death of his brother. He noted that Mr. Bradley had been a long-standing friend and colleague, and the committee deeply regretted the necessity of passing such a vote to his widow, sons, and surviving brother. Mr. O'Donoghue seconded the motion. The Chairman echoed this sentiment, expressing sorrow at the suddenness of the death. He noted that he had known Mr. Bradley for most of their lives and described him as a gentleman with many friends and few enemies. Mr. Bradley had long been honourably associated with the '*Cork Examiner*,' through which he had developed many friendships. The committee extended its sincere condolences to Mr. Bradley and his family. Mr. Daniel Egan, secretary, also associated himself with the vote, which was then passed.

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[44] *Evening Echo 16/2/1926*

Addressing the issue of local unemployment and distress in the Ballingeary district, Mr. P. O'Donoghue, M.C.C., stated that official figures on those receiving unemployment benefit or home assistance did not reflect the true extent of hardship. In remote rural districts like Ballingeary, few labourers earned enough even when employed to qualify for unemployment insurance. As such, only a small number—primarily those working on roads—were registered at the Labour Exchange. Regarding home assistance in the Macroom rural district, Mr. O'Donoghue noted it was limited to individuals who were completely destitute and physically unfit. He reported that 60 individuals in Ballingeary were seeking employment, a number that understated the true level of distress. Years of agricultural depression had severely impacted the local farming community, forcing even the families of small farmers onto the labour market in an effort to survive. Most holdings were small, and the land poor and unproductive. Even during better times, farmers in the district had been unable to benefit from prosperity due to the strict enforcement of martial law by British forces. This had prevented local fairs and markets from operating, leaving people unable to sell stock or produce. Consequently, when hardship struck, there were no financial reserves to cushion the impact. Mr. O'Donoghue stated that proposed water and sewerage works in the area would help alleviate unemployment by offering temporary employment to the worst-affected individuals, with only one member per household being employed. While the scheme would not solve the problem entirely, it would provide significant relief. He believed few other districts were in greater need of such a grant. It was agreed that the names of the County Council members representing the area would be added to the report and that it would be forwarded to the Local Government Department. Mr. E. Goold voiced his full support for the contents of the report.

Following complaints about non-payment of rent for labourers' cottages, it was agreed to serve notices for possession on the defaulting tenants. Mr. D. Egan, secretary, submitted the estimates of receipts and expenditure for the southern area of the County Board of Health for the financial

year ending 31 March 1927. Total expenditure was estimated at £30,880, with receipts projected at £10,200, leaving a net amount of £20,680 to be raised from rates.
The largest single expense was the upkeep of labourers' cottages—3,665 in total—with £13,000 allocated for their maintenance. While a £1,000 reduction was possible in the Cork rural district's repair budget, the Midleton and Macroom rural districts required increases of £2,835 and £3,210 respectively. The cottages in these areas were reported to be in particularly poor condition, and even the proposed increase, averaging just £5 per cottage, might be insufficient to make them habitable. These figures excluded loan repayments for the original construction of the cottages, which were now the responsibility of the County Council. Loan repayments to the Commissioners of Public Works and the Irish Land Commission were expected to total £11,500 for the year. The rental income from the cottages was estimated at £9,160, which would partially offset total costs. Additionally, reductions of £1,940 were anticipated in salaries, legal fees, and other expenses.[45]

By early March, another meeting of the North Cork Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held in Mallow, chaired by Mr. John Cronin. Among those present were Messrs. David Hinchin, Jeremiah McCarthy of Millstreet, John Daly, T.D., John Barrett, James S. Russell, and J. M. O'Connor. Mr. Barrett raised the issue of appointing someone to audit the books of rent collectors throughout North Cork. He proposed that Mr. Patrick Cronin, formerly Clerk of the Charleville Rural District Council, be appointed for this purpose, noting that the clerks of the now-defunct rural district councils had ceased employment as of 28th June. Mr. Barrett praised Mr. Cronin's competence and argued that employing him in this role would prevent the expense of pensioning him off.

Mr. Russell pointed out that continuing Mr. Cronin's services might mean the Committee would be liable for his £600 annual salary. The Secretary confirmed that, under the Public Bodies' Order, transferred officials could not be paid less

[45] *Cork Examiner 25/2/1926*

than their existing salary. He added that the County Council was to appoint a rate inspector who might also be used to check the rent collectors' books. Mr. Barrett clarified that this matter was separate from rate collection and related specifically to cottage rent. The Chairman, Mr. Cronin, addressed concerns raised previously at the County Council, where it was insinuated that his support for Mr. Patrick Cronin arose from a familial connection. He denied any such relationship and stated that no member of the Board or Council was related to him. He considered the accusation a personal slight and stressed that all his public actions had been in the interest of Charleville ratepayers. Mr. Daly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously adopted. This motion was proposed by Mr. Barrett and seconded by Mr. Hinchin.

The Committee agreed that Messrs. J. M. O'Connor, D. Hinchin, and W. J. Philpott would inspect the proposed site for a cottage hospital in Kanturk, along with the district engineer, the secretary, and the medical officer. They were to report their findings at the next meeting. Dr. David Barry reported an inadequate supply of clean drinking water in Kilworth and no proper provision for flushing toilets. He expressed concern that an alternative source of water—previously condemned by an analyst—had been connected to the main supply. He recommended laying new pipes to provide a safe supply. When asked, the Secretary said that the engineer, Mr. Maye, had not submitted the required reports for Kilworth and Clondulane. Mr. Daly criticised Mr. Maye’s failure to attend meetings and suggested that the work be reassigned if he would not carry out his duties. Mr. O’Connor agreed, stating that officials failing to meet their responsibilities should be dismissed. The Chairman supported this, emphasising that reports should be supplied as ordered. The Committee agreed to defer the matter to the next meeting and issue warnings to non-compliant officials.

The Committee then discussed proposed sewerage works in Banteer. The Department of Local Government had forwarded an objection from Mr. D. T. O'Callaghan and instructed that the engineer, Mr. Linehan, revise his plans to include levels and sections. Mr. Hinchin noted that he had

believed permission had been secured from Mr. O'Callaghan before work was proposed. Mr. O'Callaghan, appearing before the meeting, objected on the grounds that the proposed cesspit would pollute ponds used by his cattle. Mr. Hinchin expressed a wish to find a compromise, given the urgent need for the sewerage works. Mr. O’Callaghan refused to accept the proposal, and the matter was deferred to the next meeting.

The Engineer, Mr. D. J. Buckley, submitted a report on providing water to the Cahirmee district, with an estimated cost of £635. The Committee deferred the report pending confirmation of which residents would contribute to the cost. A similar decision was made regarding a £300 gravity-fed scheme for the Dromahane area. The annual report of Dr. McCormack, the Local Government Medical Inspector, was received. It highlighted the need for strict compliance with the Vaccination Acts in the North Cork area.

The Department approved several grants for repairs to labourers' cottages in the following areas: Fermoy, £1,573; Charleville, £203 15s; Kanturk, £401 10s; Mallow, £120 15s 6d; Mitchelstown, £673 17s; and Millstreet, £738 11s 10d—totalling £3,711 12s 1d. Mr. Hinchin remarked that the Kanturk allocation was too small to address urgent repairs. Mr. O’Connor agreed. Mr. Daly said that any additional claim from Kanturk would have the support of all members. Mr. Hinchin said he would not press the issue for now, trusting that more funding would be provided soon. Mr. Daly criticised the repair system in the Fermoy area and proposed inviting tenders from tradespeople within the relevant electoral areas to ensure that local funds benefitted local communities. Mr. Hinchin supported this, stating that keeping expenditure local would help communities feel more invested in public services. The Chairman agreed, emphasising the importance of economic development through local spending. It was resolved to approve the estimates, with a recommendation that supplementary claims be considered in future. Finally, Mr. Hinchin raised the urgent matter of the water supply in Knocknagree. He said that both local pumps were out of order, leaving residents—many of them children—without clean water. He urged

immediate action. The Committee agreed that the district engineer should prepare plans and specifications for a proper water supply for Knocknagree without delay.[46]

At a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health held soon afterwards, with Mr. William J. Broderick (Chairman) presiding, Mr. C. T. F. Russell, solicitor, appeared on behalf of a number of individuals who were acting as a committee overseeing a dance hall attached to the premises of a cottage tenant named Fitzgerald in the Bishopstown district. Mr. Russell stated that he wished to make an application on their behalf. He explained that when the matter had previously come before the Board, a letter was subsequently issued by Mr. Egan, Secretary to the South Cork Committee, instructing Mr. Fitzgerald or his clients to remove the dance hall structure. Mr. Russell contended that no opportunity had been afforded his clients to refute the allegations made during that earlier meeting, and he asserted that the Board had been misled in regard to what was actually occurring. He argued that one of the leading causes of emigration was the lack of legitimate entertainment in rural districts. When these young people, instead of frequenting public houses, had taken the initiative to provide wholesome recreation by erecting a dance hall, they had been unfairly labelled as "blackguards." Mr. Russell stated that this was entirely unjust. No all-night dances had taken place at the hall, and there had never been any intention of hosting such events. Dances were held only twice a week, from half-past seven to ten o'clock, and the committee would gladly guarantee those hours would not be exceeded. Furthermore, only Irish dances were conducted in the hall. He argued that the efforts of these young men should be encouraged, not condemned. It had also been alleged that Mr. Fitzgerald was profiting from the hall. Mr. Russell rejected this accusation, clarifying that the hall was not part of Mr. Fitzgerald's cottage holding and that he derived no financial gain from it. Mr. R. Daly interjected, stating that no such allegations had been made at the previous meeting.

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[46] *Cork Examiner 3/3/1926*

Mr. Russell reiterated that Mr. Fitzgerald had no control over the hall, had not asked for or received any payment from it, and had simply given permission for its erection on spare ground near his cottage. The hall was a corrugated iron structure, easily removable, and in no way a nuisance. Mr. O'Callaghan asked who was responsible for ensuring the dances were held only during the stated hours. Mr. Russell responded that he could bring the committee before the Board. The chairman of the committee was J. O'Sullivan. Mr. O'Callaghan, with some humour, asked whether J. O'Sullivan was the District Justice (met with laughter). Mr. Russell replied that he was not. The treasurer was C. O'Leary, and the names of all committee members were publicly displayed. They would also provide a written undertaking that no night dancing would occur. At this point, a letter from the Very Rev. Canon Barrett, P.P. of St. Finbarr's (West Parish), previously submitted to the Board on the same matter, was read aloud.

Mr. R. Daly asked, if the cottage tenant had no control over the hall or the dances, who did regulate the dance hours? Mr. Russell explained that it had been alleged Mr. Fitzgerald built the hall and advertised the dances, but he had done neither. The hall had been erected by local residents who collected £60 for the project. It was the committee who advertised the dances. Furthermore, he pointed out that just one week after the complaint was made about this hall, an all-night dance was held in Canon Barrett's own parish hall. He stressed that Mr. Fitzgerald had the right to allow the use of his property for the benefit of the local community, and that the Board should respond to the situation in a fair and reasonable manner. The Chairman responded that he had no objection to dancing—in fact, he often enjoyed it himself. However, a person charged with the moral oversight of the district (i.e., Canon Barrett) had made a complaint, and the Board would naturally support such a person in their duties. He said that if an arrangement could be reached between Canon Barrett and the committee regarding the operation and supervision of the hall, the Board would likely have no objection to it.

Mr. O'Callaghan expressed concern that, although dances were said to occur from half-past seven to ten, there seemed

to be no one in charge of enforcing that schedule. Mr. Russell assured him that committee members would be present to oversee the dances. Mr. O'Callaghan responded that it would be better if a designated person were officially in charge. Mr. B. Daly noted that the Board had already taken a decision on the matter, and that it should not be reversed. However, he suggested deferring any further action until the people involved and Canon Barrett could reach an agreement. The Chairman agreed, stating that the issue was now between Canon Barrett and the local community. If they could come to an arrangement, it could then be brought before the Board for approval. The matter was then concluded, with no further action taken at that time.[47]

Towards the month's conclusion, at a meeting of the Western Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, held at the County Home, Clonakilty, Mr. McCarthy (Chairman) presided. Also present were Messrs. J. McCarthy, Schull; D. McCarthy, Dunmanway; T. J. Murphy, T.D.; D. O'Callaghan, and T. Sheehy. The Local Government Department wrote requesting to be informed if Rent Collector Mrs. Catherine McCarthy, Dunmanway district, had entered into a bond as directed by the auditor's report on the audit of the Council's accounts for the three half-years ended 30th September last. A statement should, at the same time, be furnished showing the state of rent collection for the last three months. The Chairman asked what the last report of the Local Government auditor showed in connection with the cottage rent collection in the Dunmanway district.

The auditor's report was read, and showed that in the district in question, the arrears on labourers' cottages rents had increased from £2,179 11s 6d on 31st March 1924, to £2,923 12s 9d on 30th September 1925. The net amount due to the treasurer on 30th September 1925 was £33 16s 1d. The following amounts should be lodged: £5 petty cash in hands of the clerk; £5 8s 3d in the hands of the two collectors of cottage rents; and £9 7s 6d in the hands of a collector of water rents. The amount due by the County Council on 30th September 1925 was £2,095 10s. New bonds for Mrs.

[47] *Evening Echo 8/3/1926*

Catherine McCarthy, collector of cottage rents, and for Thomas Hartnett, collector of water rents, should be prepared. It was noted that the amount allowed for travelling expenses for each person sent for treatment to external institutions had been considerably reduced since the last audit. A payment of £18 was made to the clerk for attending meetings, and the auditor stated that he had been assured the necessary sanction had been obtained. He found it necessary, however, to disallow one payment of £2 18s. Mr. Murphy remarked that it was “a very tame report.”

The Chairman noted that, although the administration in the district was very unsatisfactory, no strictures were passed by the Government representative. Mr. Murphy said the auditor should have satisfied himself that the clerk had proper sanction for the payments in respect of meeting attendances, by examining documents to confirm such sanction. The Chairman then asked how the rent collections in the district had stood over the past few months.

The Assistant Secretary provided the following figures for collections and arrears:

- October: collected £30 14s 9d; arrears £2,971 9s 2d
- November: £4 12s 2d; £3,036 18s 4d
- December: £15 3s 6d; £3,099 7s 8d
- January: £41 11s 6d; £3,135 7s 4d
- February: £38 16s 6d; £3,174 4s 7d

Mr. Murphy said that two of the collections — those of Timothy Sullivan — were in a very bad way. He moved that the collectors be suspended and that the Committee make arrangements for the temporary collection of rents in those districts. He stated that such a step was necessary if any improvement were to be secured. Mr. D. McCarthy seconded, adding that drastic action would be required if the district was to be saved from complete ruin. The Chairman noted that there appeared to be an improvement in the prevailing month's figures and suggested that the extreme measure be withheld, pending a significant reduction in arrears by the next meeting. Mr. Murphy agreed to that course but hoped the collectors would treat this as a final

warning. It was then decided to defer action until the next meeting.

During the discussion on arrears of labourers' cottages, it was revealed that, according to available records, no rent had ever been paid in connection with one particular cottage in the Dunmanway district. Mr. Murphy stated that the money for this cottage had originally been supplied to a member of the old Dunmanway Rural Council to build it. The work was started but never completed. A labourer had taken up residence, but since the cottage was left unfinished, he had never been asked for any rent. The Chairman called the situation "perfectly scandalous" and said it was "awful." He insisted that a prosecution should be pursued in this case. It was decided to take steps to recover possession of the cottage. Further references were made to the poor state of repair of cottages in the Dunmanway district. It was agreed, on the motion of Mr. Murphy, seconded by Mr. D. McCarthy, to recommend that the County Board of Health apply to the County Council for a loan of £2,500 to carry out necessary repairs to the cottages. On the motion of Mr. Sheehy, seconded by Mr. O'Callaghan, it was also agreed to request the Local Government Department to appoint Mr. Michael O'Sullivan as permanent clerk of works for the Skibbereen area.[48]

In April 1926, at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, Mr. Wm. J. Broderick (Chairman) presided. Arising from the minutes of the last meeting, Mr. R. Daly drew attention to the estimate and demand for the coming year of the Southern Committee, particularly concerning the Midleton area. The estimate was carefully prepared by Mr. Egan, Secretary to the Southern Committee, and he had calculated that a sum of £2,835 would be required for repairs to cottages in the Midleton area. Mr. Daly pointed out that Mr. Egan would not have made such an estimate without good reason. However, at a recent Southern Committee meeting, it was decided to reduce the Midleton cottage repairs budget from £2,835 to £480 — a reduction Mr. Daly described as far too drastic. While he supported economy,

[48] *Evening Echo 23/3/1926*

this level of cutback was, in his view, unjustifiable and would only result in the cottages deteriorating further. The Chairman asked whether the figure for cottage repairs in Midleton, and every other area, was not fixed at 30 shillings per cottage. Mr. D. Egan confirmed that the agreed figure averaged around 28 shillings per cottage for the Southern area overall. Mr. R. Daly noted that while £480 was levied from the Midleton area in the previous for repairs to cottages, that money had never actually been spent for that purpose. It must have been absorbed into another public fund, and the Midleton area received no credit for it. He argued that there were about 600 cottages in the Midleton area, many in poor repair, and sufficient funds should be allocated accordingly—especially as Midleton ratepayers contributed their share to cottage repairs in other districts.

Mr. J. Daly agreed that the unspent amount from the previous year should subsequently be credited back to Midleton and used to increase their prevailing grant. He also stated that the Fermoy Rural Council had £750 in reserve, as it had been its own insurer regarding cottages. That money was in their Insurance Fund at the time of administrative restructuring, and he believed it should be spent solely within the Fermoy area. The Secretary (Mr. E. Callanan) noted this point. It was then agreed that the amount to be spent on repairs of cottages in any district would be limited to a maximum of 30 shillings per cottage, and that funds raised in each area would be used only for that area. Mr. R. Daly asked about the specific position regarding the £480 levied from Midleton in the preceding year but not spent there. The Secretary replied that the money had not yet been expended and would now be returned as a separate credit to the Midleton area. Mr. J. Daly confirmed he had made this claim, and the Secretary stated, "It will go back."

In connection with a previous decision to increase the rents of labourers' cottages in certain cases, it was proposed that the increase come into effect on 1st May. The Chairman clarified that this applied to salaried individuals occupying cottages. The Law Agent advised that specific steps would need to be taken. For example, notice would have to be given, tenancies terminated, and new agreements entered

into. Mr. J. Daly asked whether mill workers and tradesmen would be excluded from this increase. The Chairman confirmed that the Board was dealing only with salaried officials, some of whom earned up to £400 a year. The Secretary said that the rent increase in these cases would be from 2s 6d to 7s 6d per week. The Chairman confirmed: "It applies all round in respect of a salary." Mr. J. Daly asked whether a charge of 2s 6d could be applied specifically to salaried individuals occupying houses. The Secretary replied that the fixed rent in such cases had already been set at 7s 6d per week. Mr. J. Daly concluded: "Well, stick to that — so long as you leave out the poor mill workers, tradesmen, and labourers." It was then agreed to enforce the rent increases on 1st May of that year, and to notify the affected tenants that they would be required to pay the higher rent, and enter into new letting agreements. On the motion of Mr. J. Daly, seconded by Mr. Walsh, it was agreed to affix the Board's seal to their financial demand on Cork County Council for requirements up to March of the following year.[49]

In June 1926, a special meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held to discuss with the Special Finance Committee of the County Council the future of officers formerly employed by District Councils and Boards of Guardians. These officers were recommended for transfer to joint offices under the County Board of Health and the new Boards of Public Assistance. Matters under discussion included salary arrangements and related administrative issues. Mr. D. L. O'Gorman, Chairman of the County Council, chaired the meeting. Others present included: Mr. W. Broderick (Chairman of the Board of Health), Mr. T. Murphy, T.D., Mr. P. O'Donovan, Mr. D. O'Callaghan, Mr. M.J. Walsh, Mr. Brooke Brazier, Mr. R. Daly, Mrs. Murphy, Mr. Seán Buckley, Mr. K. Lynch, Mr. Michael K. Barry, Mr. Timothy Quill, Mr. C. Buckley, Mr. M. Corry, Mr. Eamonn O'Neill, and Mr. P.J. Bradley. Officers in Attendance (Recommended for Transfer) included: Mr. D. Egan (South Cork), Mr. W.H. Spiller (West Cork), Mr. Maurice Regan (North Cork), Mr. Hanley (Mallow), Mrs. Daly (Fermoy), Mr. Dennehy (Mallow), Miss Agnes Murphy (West Cork),

[49] *Evening Echo 12/4/1926*

Mr. O'Connor (Millstreet), Mr. Hegarty (Cork), Mr. Conroy, Mr. Daniel Healy, Miss Ambrose, Mr. Edmund Murphy, Mr. Richard Sheehan, Mr. David O'Herlihy, Mr. B. Curtin (Cork), Mr. O'Mahony (Clonakilty).

In South Cork, Mr. Daniel Egan was recommended as Secretary. Permanent staff included John Hegarty, Richard Sheehan, Bartholomew Curtin, Richard Flavin, and Edward Murphy. Temporary staff was comprised of Mary Ambrose, Cornelius Conroy, Daniel Healy, and David O'Herlihy. It was agreed these officers would serve both the Board of Health and the Board of Public Assistance.

For North Cork, Mr. Maurice Regan was recommended as Secretary, with Mr. Henry H. Flavin as assistant. Mr. Maurice Daly (Fermoy), Mr. Jerome J. O'Connor (Millstreet), and Mr. Patrick Dennehy were also recommended for transfer.

Down in West Cork, Mr. W.H. Spiller was to be appointed Secretary, with Mr. James O'Mahony (formerly of Bandon Union) and Miss Una Murphy (formerly of Castletown) as permanent assistants. The Temporary assistants included Mr. Byrnes and Miss Roche.

It was agreed that temporary officers would be retained for 12 months, provided their work was satisfactory. During this period, it is expected the Public Health and Public Assistance Boards will be fully constituted and empowered to appoint staff. Mr. Egan insisted that under the terms of the Local Government Act, he could not be reappointed at a lower salary. The solicitor confirmed this unless an agreement was reached with the officer. Mr. Broderick proposed transferring Mr. Egan at his full existing salary. Mr. Murphy, T.D., seconded, and the motion passed despite dissent from some members like Mr. Corry and Mr. Seán Buckley, who argued for excluding the bonus.[50]

In July, Mr. John Cronin, chairman, presided at a meeting of the Northern Committee, Cork County Board of Health, at Shortcastle, Mallow. Arising from reports of the cottage rent

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[50] *Cork Examiner 23/6/1926*

collectors regarding arrears, which in some cases amounted to considerable sums, Mr. John O'Connor moved, and Mr. Barry Sullivan seconded, that proceedings be instituted against every tenant who owed over a year's rent. Mr. Jerome McCarthy noted a similar order had already been made, and that the collector, Mrs O'Connor, was losing out due to poor collection. The Secretary explained the difficulty in enforcing the order, as the County Board of Health recognised only one solicitor, Mr. Dudley, as acting for the Northern Committee. Mr. Russell suggested it would be cheaper to employ a local solicitor, and Mr. Philpott agreed. Mr. Barrett stated that Mr. Exham was the only solicitor permanently appointed. Mr. O'Connor's motion was agreed. On the motion of Mr. Barrett, it was decided to increase the wages of Matt Cronin, caretaker of the New Cemetery, from 10s. to £1 0s. per week. The wages had previously been reduced by the County Board of Health from 30s. to 10s. Cronin was entitled to the increase as his duties had increased significantly.

It was decided, on the motion of Mr. Daniel Hinchin, to invite Mr. O'Hegan, Department of Local Government engineer, to inspect and report on Cahermee water supply and to meet local residents and the Committee's engineer. Supporting the motion, Mr. J. Harold Barry said a letter had been received from the Department of Local Government stating that if this supply were granted, it might interfere with the supply into Buttevant. The Department's engineer had never visited the mountain or seen the reservoir there, so it was impossible to give a proper statement until the source was inspected. There was nine times more water wasted from the mountain tank than was at that time collected, and if repaired, there would be enough water for Cahermee and the whole of County Cork. There was no district in Ireland so badly off for water. Residents had to depend on the Aubeg river, which was very low and contaminated at present, and on a shallow well by the roadside, which was only nine inches deep and liable to all kinds of contamination. Mr. John Barry said farmers were paying between £15 and £20 for individual pumps, whereas a small junction from the water supply at Brough Cross, Doneraile, would dispense with these pumps and supply all the farmers in the area. Dr.

Quinlan, M.O.H., reported there was no water supply for the upper part of the village of Castletownroche. Mr. John Daly, T.D., said a public meeting, presided over by the parish priest and attended by local ratepayers, had no objection to the scheme. Without the generosity of farmers who brought water in barrels, the poorer residents in the upper part of the village would have no water at all. There was no village in Ireland more in need of a water supply, which could be provided at a very low cost. There were 270 children in the national school, and surprisingly, they were free from disease. The parish priest was in favour of having the supply brought alongside the school. It was decided to proceed with the scheme on receipt of the engineer's report, Mr. Mayo.

Mr. John Barrett moved that the question of a pure water supply for the inhabitants of Ballymagooly, Rockforest, and Lavally be considered, and that the engineer be instructed to report on the most suitable source. The estimated cost was £300, and Mr. Barrett stated that Mr. Philip O'Connell was willing to dispose of the water rights on two acres of his land for £30. The supply would be a great benefit to local inhabitants. The pipes would also pass through Mr. Barrett's land, but he would be easily settled with. Mr. Philpott suggested that the Department's engineer be asked to visit and report on this supply as well, as it could not proceed without the Department's sanction. The Secretary noted it would also require approval from the County Council. Mr. O'Connor suggested adjourning the matter until they had an analysis of a water sample and a proper cost estimate prepared. Mr. Ahern, Ballymagooly, a ratepayer, said residents were dissatisfied with the scheme as drafted by Mr. Buckley, C.E. There was no drinkable water within a mile of any Ballymagooly inhabitant, which would be the place to bring the water in. After further discussion, the matter was adjourned, with Mr. O'Connor suggesting that Mr. Barrett and Mr. Ahern consult and agree on the best location for a supply suitable to all. Mr. Barrett said he was only willing for Mr. Ahern to take the scheme off his hands, as there was no water in the place suggested by Mr. Ahern. He did not expect any gain as there were enough springs on his own land.

Mr. Hinchin moved that a water supply and sewerage scheme be considered for Banteer village, for which Mr. Jerome Lenihan, C.E., had submitted a specification and plan. Mr. Hinchin submitted a memorandum signed by Canon Brew, P.P., Mr. Sheehan, P.C., and residents, urging the need for a proper, modern sewerage system to safeguard health. The population exceeded 200, and was steadily increasing. Other surrounding villages, it was asserted, had already received such improvements, though none were situated, as Banteer was on one of the chief tourist routes towards Killarney. The Secretary pointed out that the cost of the scheme should have been included in the notice of motion. The matter was adjourned to the next meeting to allow the motion to be amended and the charge area defined. A motion by Mr. J. S. Russell to have a well sunk and a pump erected near Gurthroa National School was agreed.[51]

At the end of July, the '*Ulster Herald*' reported that at a Cork County Board of Health meeting, the Medical Officer of Health for Castletown reported several cases of fever in the district, attributing the cause to the exposure for sale by hawkers and others of imported pigs' heads and old clothes.[52]

As reported in the '*Leinster Express*,' a meeting of the Western Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the Young Men's Society Hall, Schull, during August 1926. Mr. Callaghan J. McCarthy (Chairman) presided. In connection with the appointment of a clerk of works in the Bantry district, where the Chairman gave his casting vote to one of the candidates after each had received an equal number of votes, a letter was received from Messrs. Exham & Sons, law agents, expressing the view, in accordance with the regulations of the County Board of Health, "that the chairman had not the power of giving a casting vote in such circumstances."

The Chairman said, in view of that fact, the appointment in question would fall through. Mr. McCarthy (Schull) said the

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[51] *Cork Examiner 6/7/1926*

[52] *Ulster Herald 31/7/1926*

County Board of Health had since dealt with the matter. They, however, took it that it was the feeling of the committee that they should deal with it in the way they had done. Mr. Murphy said he objected to the County Board taking such a matter out of the hands of the committee. When the chairman of the committee gave his casting vote, he did not declare any of the candidates elected, as he had a doubt as to whether he could give a casting vote. The matter was then referred to the County Board, but that body was not justified in making any appointment. The matter should have been referred back to the committee to be dealt with. The Chairman quipped that "if I thought I had no power to give the casting vote, I would not have given it."

Mr. Sheehy suggested that, if the County Board were allowed to overrule the committee, the members of the committee had no business coming to meetings. In fairness and justice, the appointment should be referred back to the committee for decision. On the motion of Mr. Murphy, seconded by Mr. Sheehy, it was decided that the County Board be requested to refer the matter back to the committee for its decision.

It was announced that Dr. McCormack, Local Government Inspector, intended to visit the Castletownbere district in the immediate future. The Chairman said such a visit was very necessary, as the district was badly in need of hospital accommodation. The Secretary declared that, by order of the Ministry, a fever hospital was to be provided for that district. Castletownbere had asked for such a hospital, which was absolutely necessary, and they had got what they asked for—a fever hospital. It was his own opinion, especially as they would soon have a fine general hospital at Bantry, that they should have sought a general hospital for the district. Mr. O'Mahony asked if the new county hospital would be able to deal with cases from other districts. The Secretary replied in the affirmative and said cases from Clonakilty and other districts could be treated there. No action was taken.

Mr. Murphy proposed that an application be made to the Local Government Department for a loan of £2,000 under the local loans scheme to improve Dunmanway's water supply, based on a scheme prepared by Mr. B. O'Flynn, B.E. He

emphasised the urgent need for the improvement and requested that both the County Board of Health and County Council expedite the application. He also suggested that the cost of the loan should be charged to the Dunmanway district.[53]

In September 1926, at a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, Mr. O'Flynn, the committee's engineer, reported on the pump at Walterstown, Cove. He explained that the pump had been sunk some years ago to supply water to cottages and the local school. However, work had to stop at a certain depth due to a shortage of explosives. The well was then covered over, and a temporary pump installed. Unfortunately, the supply failed during the summer months. Now that explosives were available again, he recommended resuming work because the water supply was very necessary. It was decided to include this matter on the agenda for the next meeting. Mr. O'Flynn also reported that work on the water supply at Coachford was complete, but the pipe laid in the village was comprised of too small a diameter, and partly blocked by incrustation. He recommended replacing 100 yards with two-inch cast iron pipe. This would also be discussed at the next meeting. He further reported on Ahiohill water supply, which had been condemned. There was no public supply there, only two private pumps and two springs in use. No warning notices had been posted about the contamination, which Mr. O'Sullivan said he had not heard of. The Secretary said she would forward notices to the sanitary officer to warn people against using the water.

Mr. Brasier raised concerns about the condition of a well at Shanakiel. The spring had ceased to flow and the water in the well was stagnant. Though there was a nearby stream, it was open to pollution from cattle. Mr. Brasier suggested installing a fountain or a cheap pump to provide a better water supply. While acknowledging that rates were already high in the Midleton area, he felt the cost would not be large and asked the engineer to visit and report. The Chairman noted that the low water levels were due to a very dry season

[53] *Leinster Express 24/8/1926*

and referred the matter to the engineer. Dr. O'Sullivan reported that the water supply in Sandycove, Kinsale, was unsatisfactory. He recommended constructing a suitably covered well near the village. The Chairman commented that Sandycove was some distance from the town. Mr. Brasier noted Sandycove was a densely populated village. Mr. Carey agreed the medical officer's recommendation should be implemented, and the matter was referred to the engineer.

Regarding trees in graveyards, the caretaker of Carrigrohane graveyard, Mr. Sexton, reported that Mr. Wood had cut some trees without notifying him. Mr. Brasier asked if the graveyard was vested in the committee. The Chairman explained there were two graveyards there; one was vested and the other was not. Mr. Kenrick, the sanitary officer, said complaints had been made about a tomb, but he saw no issue since it had been sealed according to the engineer's instructions. Some people wanted the trees cut. Mr. Corry said the caretaker should have been notified. An order was made for the engineer to report on this and on Templenacarriga graveyard, where large tree branches were overhanging a wall in danger of collapse during storms.

On vacant cottages, two applicants were vying for a vacant cottage in Ballinamodree (Cork Rural District): Timothy Driscoll (married) and Edward Spillane (unmarried). Mr. Corry supported Spillane, noting he was the only one to submit a written application. Driscoll was allowed to submit a written application at the meeting. Mr. Corry criticised this as a trick, loudly supporting Spillane. The Chairman asked him to behave. Mr. Brazier said he couldn't behave himself. Mr. Carey argued that a man with a family was entitled to the cottage. Mr. Corry retorted that Driscoll had not applied properly. A vote was held and Driscoll was appointed tenant, with the Chairman and others voting for him. Mr. Corry accused them of forming a "combination," to which Mr. O'Sullivan replied it was a "combination of justice." Mr. Corry continued to complain, saying Spillane was facing a tough opposition. Regarding another cottage at Forty Acres, recently vacated by Miss K. McGrath (who had emigrated to America), several applicants had come forward. Mr. Corry proposed appointing a tenant, but Mr. Brasier opposed

rushing into a possibly illegal decision, and suggested waiting for a report from the rent collector. Mr. Corry said the tenant had gone to America. Mr. O'Sullivan supported Brasier's motion. Mr. Ahern proposed instructing the rent collector to regain possession of the cottage and advertise it. Meanwhile, a caretaker should be appointed since the cottage was then being used by "tramps and tinkers."[54]

By October 1926, a meeting of the Western Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the County Home, Clonakilty, with Mr. Callaghan J. McCarthy as chairman. The Secretary referred to a statement made by the County Council Secretary regarding the financial status of the West Cork Board of Public Assistance. It was claimed that the County Council had paid the Board its full amount up to 30th September. The Chairman noted that Cork County Council had understood that money was to be forwarded to the West Cork locality for public assistance. The Secretary explained that he had received £2,000 the day after the County Council meeting, but said this was insufficient for their needs. The Chairman acknowledged that more funds were expected if necessary. The Secretary added that the County Council Secretary contended the Board had received only half of the £27,000 due by 30th September and was entitled to no more before that date. However, the instruction had been that the County Council should transfer one-quarter of the demand at its first meeting each quarter, which had not been done. The Chairman replied that if the County Council lacked funds, it could not provide more money immediately. The Secretary emphasised that £6,000 was urgently needed for the Board's requirements. Mr. O'Callaghan remarked that the County Council Secretary often tried to create confusion, and suggested there was something behind his statement about West Cork's affairs. He had requested information comparing rates paid in West Cork with other districts but had not received it. He believed that if such data were provided, it would show West Cork was disadvantaged and deprived of the funds it was entitled to.

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[54] *Leinster Express 16/9/1926*

The Chairman said that the County Council had announced that another £2,000 or £3,000 would be available shortly. The Secretary stated that if he could secure another £2,000, it would keep things going for a while since the £2,000 already received had been used to pay pressing accounts and necessary expenses. It was then decided to recommend that the County Council make a further substantial contribution to the Board.

An application was received from ten residents of Tower Street, Bantry, requesting a pump to be installed at the end of the street to provide an adequate water supply. It was decided to obtain a report from the local waterworks curator. Eleven residents of Glengariff submitted a petition asking for repairs to the local water reservoir, which had been leaking and causing water shortages in dry weather. It was ordered that the Engineer report on the issue. Dr. Fuller submitted a report on the filthy condition of the streets of Ballineen, and it was decided to take action to improve the situation. A letter was read from James Cunningham of Dunmanway, stating that he had repaired his cottage several times over the past three years and requesting compensation. The Chairman said this could not be addressed until a report from the Clerk of Works was received regarding the repairs done. The matter was deferred pending that report. The meeting spent some time considering and accepting tenders for repairs to cottages in Dunmanway, Schull, and Skibbereen.

The County Analyst, Mr. D.J. Mahony, reported on a water sample from the Drimoleague pump. He found elevated levels of common salt and free ammonia, indicating surface contamination with organic material of animal origin. He advised the water in its prevailing state was unsuitable for continuous drinking use. He recommended cleaning the well, diverting surface water, and preventing contamination. If no better water source was available, the water should be boiled before drinking. Dr. J.J. Fuller reported that the local ratepayers of Drimoleague were eager to have a water supply, and wished to be informed about whether charges would be on a dispensary or rural basis. The only supply was from the pump mentioned by the Engineer, Mr. Crowley. The local Improvement Committee believed the cost should not

exceed £2,000. The Engineer estimated the scheme would cost between £2,500 and £3,000. It was decided to inform the Drimoleague area Committee that such a scheme would be charged as a dispensary rate. Finally, the tender of Michael Donovan, of the Rosscarbery area, at £67 for repairs to Castletownshend Waterworks, was accepted.[55]

In early November 1926, remarkably, at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, it was reported that human remains, believed to be those of the late Lieutenant C. J. Guthrie of the Auxiliary Division of the R.I.C., who had been killed in Macroom circa 1920, had been discovered in a bog. The Board resolved to notify the Commissioner.[56]

By December, it was reported that Mr. Seán O'Farrell (Commissioner), presided over the meeting of the North Cork County Board of Health, held in Mallow. The Ministry had approved the acceptance of a tender from Messrs. Coughlan Bros., Cork, for the construction of a hospital in Kanturk. Regarding a past outbreak of typhus in Fermoy, it was noted that no further cases had been reported from the district. The Commissioner expressed gratitude to the military authorities for their generous provision of a disinfector during the outbreak, and plans were underway to install one permanently at the hospital. The Secretary, Mr. M. O'Regan, reported that the Board's books covering the period from May 1, 1924, to March 31, 1926, had been audited without any alterations or surcharges. The Commissioner remarked that this was very satisfactory. An order was made to place Dr. O'Brien of Mitchelstown on the full salary scale, as his dispensary was categorised as full-sized.

In relation to developing a new, Kanturk-based hospital, the Commissioner noted that while contractors had been asked to submit their own proposals for heating and lighting, the Association of Consulting Engineers had criticised this approach as unfair. As a result, all tenders were to be

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[55] *Evening Echo 19/10/1926*

[56] *Cork Examiner 4/11/1926*

referred, unopened, to the Department of Local Government for evaluation. The Department would select the most suitable scheme, and tenders would then be invited on that basis. This revised process was not expected to cause any delay to the regional hospital's construction. It was noted that additional accommodation for attendants, as well as facilities for the electric light plant and ambulance, would be tendered separately. A residence for the medical officer was also planned, with drawings at that time being prepared. Mrs. Webb and Miss Jones attended the meeting to seek permission to organise an entertainment for patients and residents on January 5th. The Commissioner granted approval and thanked them for their efforts, also awarding a grant of £10 in support of the initiative.[57]

At the close of 1926, a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the Courthouse, presided over by Mr. T. Corcoran (Chairman). Mr. O'Flynn, Engineer, reported that, as drainage pipes for the Ballincollig scheme were freshly obtainable, tenders should be invited in time for the next meeting. It was agreed to proceed with advertising for tenders. He also addressed the sewerage arrangements for city Corporation buildings at the Capwell site, cautioning that if the committee acted under the Rivers Pollution Act, they would be responsible for maintaining the purity of the Tramore River. Since the Tramore Drainage Board oversaw the river, any discharge into it could draw objection. The committee ordered the law agent to report on the legal implications. Responding to a complaint from the Harbour Board regarding sewage deposits near the outlet at Blackrock, Mr. O'Flynn stated the Board had agreed, on his recommendation, to extend the outfall pipe by 60 feet further onto the foreshore. Necessary pipes had been ordered, and installation would proceed when tidal conditions allowed. The engineer also recommended serving notices to landlords of houses on Fox Street, Bandon, to ensure the erection of proper W.C.s and yard drainage. A sewer had been laid three years earlier to provide drainage, along with a 3-inch water main. The Medical Officer of Health had flagged unsatisfactory sanitary conditions in

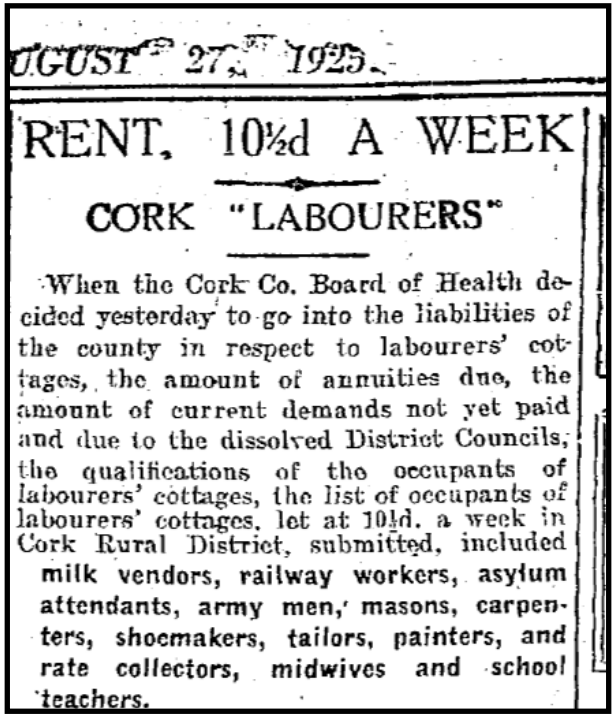
[57] *Cork Examiner 23/12/1926*

many of the homes. The committee agreed to proceed with notices.

Mr. Buckley raised a concern about ground subsidence around the Collins monument at Curraghkippane, stressing the need to protect it due to its public significance and cost. The Chairman noted that the issue was due to subsidence, not the monument's construction, and emphasised the public's responsibility. The committee agreed to have the matter attended to.

Mr. O'Flynn estimated that an additional £2 would cover the cost of laying 300 yards of piping as part of the Whitegate water supply scheme. The proposal was moved by Mr. Carey and seconded by Mr. Buckley, and the work was approved. He also reported on the Scilly water supply, where only one well was available to serve approximately 300 people. He recommended constructing six refuse pits with covered, removable iron containers at an estimated cost of £72. The committee approved the recommendation, but agreed to defer the work until summer, in line with the engineer's advice.[58]

[58] *Leinster Leader 30/12/1926*



UGUST 27, 1925.

RENT, 10½d A WEEK

CORK "LABOURERS"

When the Cork Co. Board of Health decided yesterday to go into the liabilities of the county in respect to labourers' cottages, the amount of annuities due, the amount of current demands not yet paid and due to the dissolved District Councils, the qualifications of the occupants of labourers' cottages, the list of occupants of labourers' cottages, let at 10½d. a week in Cork Rural District, submitted, included milk vendors, railway workers, asylum attendants, army men, masons, carpenters, shoemakers, tailors, painters, and rate collectors, midwives and school teachers.

Finances pertaining to labourers' cottages posed a major challenge for the Cork County Board of Health during the 1920s.

(Source: 'Irish Independent' 27/8/1925)

CONSOLIDATING WELFARE INFRASTRUCTURE, 1927-1928

A meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held in January 1927 at the Courthouse in Cork city centre. Mr W. J. Broderick presided as Chairman. Mr P. J. Bradley raised the case of a cottage tenant whose rent had been increased from 1s to 2s 6d per week. The tenant, unable to find work locally, had moved to the town and was employed on the railway, earning £2 7s a week. He had a wife and family to support, as well as a brother and a widow. Mr Bradley asked that the rent be reverted to its original rate. Mr Barry stated that there should be no rigid rules in such cases and that the Board should exercise discretion. Mr John Daly, T.D., agreed that this particular case merited special consideration. The Chairman added that the prevailing policy might not apply to wage earners and suggested the case be referred back to the Southern Committee, with a recommendation to restore the original rent. Mr John Daly also brought up another case, where a tenant's rent had been raised because a small farmer —formerly a working man—had come to live with the tenant. This case too was referred back to the Southern Committee for further review.

Another matter discussed was a complaint by a teacher who objected to a weekly rent of 7s 6d for a cottage at Aughabullogue. The Southern Committee had previously confirmed this rent, and after discussion, the Board decided to ratify the decision, considering it fair. The Board then considered a recommendation from the Northern Committee to increase the salary of Mr E. Ryan, Clerk of Works for Charleville, from £30 to £50 per year. The Chairman reminded the Board that this matter had already been sent back to the Northern Committee for clarification on the grounds of the increase. However, the committee had resubmitted the recommendation without providing further explanation. The Secretary of the Northern Committee explained that under the former Charleville Rural District Council, Mr Ryan had received £30 annually plus a £20 bonus. When he transferred to Mallow, the bonus was discontinued, and Mr Ryan was now seeking the restoration

of this £20, as well as for it to be made retrospective for the past year. Mr R. Daly argued that, based on the workload in Charleville, which he considered to be light, the salary should remain at £30, especially in light of the County Council's financial constraints. Mr John Daly proposed a compromise of £40 per year, removing the bonus entirely. Following deliberation, the Board decided to maintain Mr Ryan's salary at £30 per year, and rejected the reintroduction of the £20 bonus.[59]

Mr T. Corcoran, Chairman, presided at another meeting held pertaining to the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health. The Secretary read a report dealing with the increases in water rents in the districts of Cloyne, Castlemartyr, Killetigh, and Carrigtwohill. The new rents recommended represented increases in these areas of £25, £17 15s 0d, £8 15s 0d, and £10 10s 0d respectively. Mr Corry inquired about the reason for the increases, and the Secretary explained that the aim was to bring the rates in these areas into conformity with rates in other localities. Mr Carey added that the intention was to standardise the pricing among the different communities. As the matter was not listed on the agenda, it was decided to consider the report at the next meeting.

Dr D. O'Sullivan reported two cases of enteric fever involving children from a fisherman's family at Dock, Castle Park in Kinsale. The children's parents had refused hospitalisation. Dr O'Sullivan believed the cause was a contaminated well commonly used in the area. A third case from the same location had been admitted to hospital earlier in the month. He urged that a specific well, located in a field belonging to Mr O'Donovan, be addressed in line with his previous recommendations dating back to 1926.

Concerns were also raised by local residents. One local, Mr E. O'Neill, stated that while the engineer had been expected to address the issue, it seemed no progress had been made. Mrs Kate O'Donovan also appealed for urgent action, emphasising that the well had already been linked to two

[59] *Evening Echo 10/1/1927*

outbreaks of typhoid in less than two years. She insisted that installing a pump could prevent further illness and save money in the long term. The Local Government Department had also received a letter from Dr O'Sullivan, reiterating that the likely cause of infection was the contaminated well. He noted that despite reporting the issue multiple times since 1923, including to both the Kinsale Rural District Council and the South Cork Public Health Committee, no corrective action had been taken in that period.

The Local Government Department also submitted a communication from Dr O'Sullivan. In it, he stated that the source of infection was almost certainly due to water from the contaminated well. Reports had previously been made to the Kinsale Rural District Council as far back as 1923, and to the South Cork Public Health Committee on 10th April 1926. However, neither body had yet acted to make the well safe for domestic use. He had again brought the issue to the attention of the Public Health Committee. The Secretary noted that the well was privately owned. Mr O'Flynn, the engineer, had been requested to report on it. The Chairman ordered Mr O'Flynn to visit the well and report on measures to rectify the matter.

Conditions at the Clondrohid graveyard were then raised by Mr O'Donoghue, who expressed concern about a proposal to close the site. He said, "I hope to be buried there myself one day," and felt strongly with the local people that the graveyard should remain open. He did not foresee future congestion, as many people were moving to Cork, and the Macroom Urban Council had decided to acquire a new burial ground. This, he said, would relieve any pressure on Clondrohid. He suggested beginning by cleaning the existing graveyard properly. Mr T. Quill, M.C.C., added that he would never support closing the graveyard, but would instead recommend extending it. He noted that there were nearly daily funerals there, sometimes two in one day. An extension, he felt, was the only viable solution.

The Chairman agreed, stating that closing the graveyard was out of the question and would provoke serious unrest. Mr O'Donoghue suggested adjourning any decision on the

extension for three months. In the meantime, the caretaker would be asked to keep a record of the number of burials during that period. This suggestion was accepted, and the Engineer was directed to inspect Clondrohid, Coachford, and other cemeteries mentioned by members as requiring maintenance and to report on their conditions.

A minor issue arose regarding the letting of a cottage at Commons. There were three applicants: Walsh, Flynn, and Burke. Flynn withdrew in favour of Burke. A vote was then taken between Walsh and Burke. The result was: Walsh—Messrs Aherne, Carey, Goold, and O'Donoghue (4 votes); Burke—Messrs Bradley, O'Sullivan, Corry, and Buckley (4 votes).

The Chairman hesitated before casting the deciding vote. Mr Corry urged him to decide, remarking that since the Chairman was going to represent them in the Dáil, he should be able to resolve this issue. The Chairman ultimately voted in favour of Walsh, who was then appointed tenant. Other cottage lettings at Ahaduff and Coome were also approved without any complications.[60]

Another special meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health took place in February 1927 at the County Council Chamber in Cork City, chaired by Mr T. Corcoran. Present were Messrs B. W. Brasier, C. Buckley, M. J. Corry, and P. J. Bradley. The committee discussed the case of a cottage at Ballyvergen, reportedly unoccupied by the tenant, Thomas Barrett, for eight years. However, cottage rent collector Mr Justin Condon disputed this, explaining that although the house was often locked during his visits—due to Barrett being away for work—it was not accurate to say it had been unoccupied that long. Barrett was unmarried and sometimes stayed at his mother's cottage in Kennel. Mr Condon also noted that he could not verify allegations that the cottage had been sublet or used for dancing. Mr Brasier called for a deeper investigation and suggested that if Barrett had not been living there, he should be asked to vacate. The Chairman agreed, and a notice to quit was ordered.

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[60] *Evening Echo 12/1/1927*

Regarding cottage repairs, Mr Buckley asked about the status of ongoing work. Clerk of works Mr Bary responded that a contractor had been issued a 14-day notice, due to expire on the 14th. Mr Buckley expressed frustration at the slow pace of repairs, and Mr Corry urged that penalties be enforced promptly if progress remained insufficient. Another issue raised involved a cottage at Captain's Hill, where tenant James Mahony was reportedly not residing and had not paid rent. The committee decided to serve a notice to quit in this case as well.

In Midleton, rent collector Mr Scanlan reported that James Barrett, the tenant of a cottage at Kilmacahill, was in arrears by about £15. Barrett's wife expressed willingness to pay 10 shillings per month from March and requested to be named as the tenant. However, the cottage was in poor condition, lacking even floors. Mr Twomey, clerk of works, confirmed the state of disrepair and stated that Barrett was not likely responsible for the damage. Mr Corry noted that he had seen receipts showing some rent had been paid and called for further investigation. The Chairman agreed but stressed that the property was owned by the Board and the tenant must uphold the rental agreement.

Storm damage was another concern, with Mr Bradley reporting that several cottages in the St Mary's district had sustained severe roof damage. Mr Buckley proposed that the clerk of works conduct an inspection, and this was approved. Water supply issues were also addressed. A motion from Mr Buckley to provide water to Ballyphilip was deferred. Meanwhile, Mr Brasier proposed the installation of a pump at Shanakiel, to serve 15 cottages across two town-lands. The prevailing water source—a well—was contaminated and unsuitable for drinking. Maurice Lynch, the landowner, had agreed to offer water from his own well at no cost, requiring only a short pipeline to the road. The Chairman praised this generosity, Mr Buckley seconded the motion, and the proposal was approved. Lastly, Mr Corry raised concerns about the salaries of Board officials. He called for an official inquiry into the matter, citing inconsistencies and inefficiencies. Some rent collectors were earning higher

commissions than others for similar work, and the financial losses from the cottages—around £3 15s per unit per year—were, in his view, due to staff redundancies and high pay. He claimed that bonuses given to officials in Cork's rural district were not extended to other districts, which he saw as unfair. Mr Corry felt a review could lead to significant savings.

Mr Buckley jokingly asked if any staff had complained about being overpaid, and Mr Bradley added that some might benefit from an inquiry if their salaries were found to be too low. Mr Corry maintained that both a revision and reduction were likely. The Chairman reminded the group that the two were not the same. Tensions briefly rose when Mr Bradley criticised Mr Corry for being inconsistent—rejecting government infrastructure, but wanting to use its processes. Mr Corry defended his position, stating that, as a ratepayer, he had every right to seek a review.[61]

A meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health took place a few days later, chaired by Mr T. Corcoran. The Secretary, Mr D. Egan, presented a report detailing receipts, expenditures, and the overall financial burden on ratepayers for labourers' cottages across the rural districts within the committee's remit. Mr Bradley addressed claims that the Cork Rural District was incurring greater costs than the other five rural districts and that these other areas were allegedly subsidising Cork. He refuted these statements—made previously by Mr Corry—and explained that the figures clearly showed the opposite: Cork was, in fact, contributing over two shillings in the pound more than the other districts to cover shortfalls elsewhere. The Chairman echoed this point, saying the figures disproved the notion that other districts were subsidising Cork. Three tenders—valued at £210, £222, and £240 per year—were received for maintaining fountains and pumps in the Midleton district over a three-year period. Mr Corry asked what such maintenance had cost in previous years, to which the Secretary replied that last year's contractor charged £30 annually. Mr Ahern remarked that the prevailing tenders seemed excessive. The engineer, Mr O'Flynn, suggested

[61] *Cork Examiner 12/2/1927*

assigning one of the committee's own employees to the work instead. He noted that in the past, maintenance had been limited to superficial patching, but using a direct employee would allow for more thorough care. This proposal was adopted. There were no tenders received for two separate projects: extending a sewer on Ballinlough Road, and deepening a well at Walterstown, Cove (Cobh). It was agreed that both jobs would be re-advertised.

Turning to the issue of cottage tenancies, rent collector Mr Delaney reported that a number of tenants in his area were refusing to pay the increased rents recently imposed by the committee. He asked for guidance on how to proceed. The Chairman inquired about the scale of the issue and the tenants' circumstances. Mr Delaney said there were several such cases. One involved a tenant named Lynch, a milk vendor, who had been assigned his cottage when it was newly built. He had made improvements to the property and believed the rent increase was unfair. Mr Buckley said Lynch had originally been granted the cottage as a labourer after going through the formal process, and it was unjust that his rent should now be raised to 2s. 6d. per week simply because he had modestly improved his financial situation. Mr Bradley announced his intention to propose a motion to overturn the committee's earlier decision to increase rents in such cases, arguing that tenants who were originally eligible should not be penalised later. In response, the Chairman asked whether Mr Bradley's motion would also apply to tenants earning £500 a year. Mr Bradley said he was unaware of any tenants on such incomes in any part of the county. The Chairman contended that there were indeed people living in labourers' cottages who were now relatively well off, and that this was unfair—particularly given the large number of genuine labourers still unable to secure housing. Mr Buckley countered that those who were originally granted cottages as legitimate labourers should not be displaced or penalised, simply due to minor improvements in their circumstances.[62]

During mid-March 1927, the '*Cork Examiner*' reported that the Cork County Board of Health addressed matters

[62] *Cork Examiner 24/2/1927*

concerning officials who had previously served under the former Rural District Councils, and whose transfer to the County Council was required. It was also agreed that any outstanding bonus payments owed to these officials would be paid.[63]

Furthermore, the '*Southern Star*' documented that a notice published in Iris Oifigiúil by the Department of Local Government and Public Health announced amendments to the Cork County Assistance Scheme. These changes were introduced to bring the scheme into line with the Local Government Act of 1925 and involved revisions to the division of the various county and county boroughs for administrative purposes. The names of the administrative areas were updated. The North, South, and West Cork County Districts were renamed the North, South, and West Cork County Public Assistance Districts, respectively. In addition, the North and West Cork County Boards of Health were renamed the North and West County Boards of Public Assistance.

Several new articles were also added to the existing county scheme. The North County Board was to consist of ten members, all elected from among the County Council's members. The South County Board was to have fifteen members—five elected by the Cork Corporation and ten by the County Council, again from their own membership. The West County Board was to consist of ten members, all elected by the County Council. It was also stipulated that the five members representing the city Corporation on the South County Board were to be elected at the first meeting of the Corporation following a triennial election. Their term would continue until the day after their successors were chosen.

The amendments further clarified that, in addition to the above provisions, the rules set out in the Second Schedule of the Local Government Act, 1925, would apply to the election of County Board members by the County Council. These rules would govern the formation, operations, and financial procedures of the County Boards, treating each of the

[63] *Cork Examiner 15/3/1927*

districts as a County Health District for these administrative purposes. Lastly, paragraph (iv) of Article 13 of the Cork Joint County Scheme was amended. The phrase “or in such other manner as may be prescribed” was added after the word “Guardians,” allowing for greater flexibility in appointments. This set of amendments was formally titled the Cork County Scheme (Amendment) Order, 1927.[64]

At the end of the month, Mr. T. Corcoran, Chairman, presided over a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, held in the County Council Chamber at the Courthouse in Cork. Members present included Messrs. P. J. Bradley, Richard Daly, Edmund Carey, Brooke W. Brasier, E. Ahern, M. J. Corry, Cornelius Buckley, Jerh. Sullivan, P. J. O'Donoghue, and E. Goold. Mr. O’Flynn, the Committee Engineer, reported that a complaint had been made regarding a blocked sewer on the road in Ballycotton. He clarified that there was no public sewer at the site; instead, the problem originated from three private houses whose drainage crossed under the public road to the foreshore. The blockage was located where the drain passed beneath the road. It was agreed that the homeowners involved should be formally notified to clear the obstruction. Similarly, notices were ordered to be served on Messrs. Morrogh, the owners of properties in Grange, whose drainage system the engineer identified as a serious nuisance. Regarding the Dock Well in Kinsale, Mr. O’Flynn stated that a water analysis had deemed it unfit for consumption. He recommended cleaning the well, limewashing the walls, and cutting a trench around it to prevent surface water from entering. He also proposed installing a pump, though he expressed doubt that such measures would resolve the pollution issue. The matter was referred back to the Engineer for further consideration. The Engineer also submitted a report on Clondrohid, a village of about a dozen houses on a hillside near a river, with a school approximately 300 yards away. The village’s main water supply came from a spring located slightly above the riverbank. The water quality was good, and the supply was adequate, but the approach to the spring was difficult and unsafe for children. The school, with

[64] *Southern Star 19/3/1927*

nearly 180 pupils, had no proper water supply and relied on water from a boggy stream. A spring was available that could be piped to the school at a cost of £190, though a well might be a cheaper solution. The local creamery expressed willingness to pump water to the public road for village use if they were allowed access to the spring.

Mr. O'Donoghue gave notice of a motion for the next meeting. The Committee at-hand had been discussing the appointment of clerks of works. The County Board of Health had recommended appointing two additional clerks, alongside Mr. P. J. Murphy, with total remuneration not exceeding £500 per year. A letter from Mr. E. Callanan, Secretary to the County Board, suggested that £500 should be sufficient to oversee cottage repairs in the area. The County Board asked for the Committee's input on how best to allocate the sum—whether by appointing two or more clerks or basing it on a percentage of the expenditure. Mr. Carey argued that it was unfair for both the eastern and western regions to be served by only one clerk, especially when concerns were being raised about inadequate pump maintenance in the Midleton and Youghal areas. Mr. O'Flynn noted that Mr. Murphy's responsibilities mainly involved work near the city, where significant purification works were located. Mr. Carey countered that in his area, all the pumps were out of order, which was a serious concern. Mr. C. Buckley moved, seconded by Mr. Bradley, that the matter be deferred for a month, and this proposal was accepted.

The Secretary read a letter from the Housing Department of the Department of Local Government and Public Health highlighting that, as of 31 December, the district had arrears of £3,709 18s. 7d. on an average monthly rental of £767. The unusually high arrears were attributed to poor collection rates in various areas, including Bandon No. 2 (£108 9s. 9d), Cork Nos. 1, 2, 5, and 7, Kinsale, Macroom Nos. 1 and 2, Midleton Nos. 1 and 2, and Youghal. It was decided to defer the matter to the next meeting.

The Committee discussed whether to retain the services of Mr. Richardson, the dairy inspector. The County Board of Health had questioned whether his duties overlapped with

those of the veterinary inspector. Mr. O'Donoghue proposed postponing any decision until the Milk Commission had completed its report and made recommendations. He believed it was not the Committee's role to oversee the milk supply. Mr. Bradley disagreed, saying the public had entrusted them with that responsibility. Mr. Brasier praised Mr. Richardson's work, and the Chairman remarked that the high standard of Cork's milk supply, as noted by Mr. Monaghan, was largely thanks to Mr. Richardson's efforts. Mr. Buckley stated that this success validated Richardson's role. The Chairman recalled that the Cork Rural District Council had established the position 25 years ago and made substantial progress under the Dairies and Cowsheds Order. He predicted the Government would soon legislate on milk supply in towns and cities. Mr. O'Donoghue's proposal to defer the decision was accepted.

Mr. O'Donoghue asked whether the Committee had the authority to take over graveyards not legally vested in them. The Chairman confirmed that they did. Mr. O'Donoghue referred to the old graveyard in Kilcolman, at that time maintained by a local committee. The Secretary asked whether there was a church on the grounds, to which Mr. O'Donoghue replied that, as far as he knew, there was not and that the Church body had no claim to the site. The Chairman noted that the Committee, as the sanitary authority, had certain powers in such matters. Mr. O'Donoghue added that the local committee was no longer willing to continue managing it. The Secretary suggested writing to the Southern Committee of Health to arrange for a formal transfer of responsibility. Mr. Bradley cautioned that the local committee might not have the legal right to transfer the graveyard, as they were merely acting in the public interest and for the benefit of those with family buried there.[65]

At the turn of April 1927, a meeting of the Northern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held at Mallow, presided over by Mr John Cronin (Chairman). Also present were: Messrs D. Hinchin, J. Daly, T.D.; James S. Russell, J. M. O'Connor, Jerome McCarthy (Millstreet),

[65] *Cork Examiner 31/3/1927*

Barry Sullivan (solicitor), W. J. Philpott, John Barry, and John Barrett. A deputation from Knockylin, near Freemount, appeared before the meeting to request that steps be taken to remedy a defective sewer in the district, which was causing damage to houses and property. It was decided to refer the complaint to the engineer for a report.

A discussion took place on the action of the Ministry regarding the employment of engineers for all the engineering work under the Cork County Board of Health. Mr B. O'Flynn, B.E., was appointed engineer of the Southern area and consulting engineer to the Northern and Western areas at a salary of £500 per annum, with an allowance of £100 for extra office expenses and 6d per mile when travelling on Board business outside the area of the former Cork Rural District. In the Western area, Mr Jas. J. O'Crowley was appointed engineer for the West Cork area at a salary of £400 per annum, with a travelling allowance of 6d per mile. Mr Patrick Coughlan was appointed engineer for the Northern area at a salary of £400 per annum, with a travelling allowance of 6d per mile. Messrs D. J. Buckley and Jerh. Linehan were appointed clerks of works at £152 and £208 per annum respectively in the Northern area. It was urged that immediate attention be given to the repair of cottages in the various districts. Mr O'Connor said he believed there was economy to be practised. They had elected one engineer for their own area, but it was now proposed to retain some of the other engineers in areas under their charge. Mr Daly stated that when the matter came before the County Board, it had recommended the retention of the other two engineers as clerks of works. Mr Sullivan said that, as the Department had sanctioned the arrangements, the Committee had nothing more to say. After discussion, the Committee approved the arrangements made. Mr Coughlan was to be in charge and responsible for the engineering work in the Northern area, with Messrs Buckley and Linehan as his assistants. Mr Hinchin stressed the importance of carrying out cottage repairs promptly.

The Engineer (Mr Coughlan) stated that he intended to visit each district, prepare a list of all cottages requiring repair, and then arrange for their repair with his staff. Mr Hinchin

asked if, in his opinion, the repairs would be better carried out by direct labour rather than by contract. The Engineer replied that this would depend on the overall cost. Mr Hinchin suggested that, where possible, the tenants should be allowed to do the repair work themselves. The Engineer said he would keep that in mind and, if the work could be done locally at a reasonable rate, he would proceed accordingly. It was agreed that steps be taken by the Engineer to deal with the cottages in disrepair. On the motion of Mr Daly, seconded by Mr Barry, it was agreed to give the necessary guarantee to the Postmaster-General for the extension of the telegraph office to Churchtown.

It was decided to recommend to the County Council the securing of loans totalling £7,385 for the following sanitary works:

- Mitchelstown water supply – £350
- Castletownroche – £1,384
- Ballymagooly and Rockforest – £1,752
- Kilworth – £860
- Skeheenaragh – £351
- Dromahane – £215
- Liscarroll sewerage works – £500
- Knocknagree water supply – £300

On the motion of Mr Sullivan, seconded by Mr Barrett, the Engineer was instructed to examine the existing water supply at the schoolhouse in Annalentha, Mourneabbey.

The Condensed Milk Co. of Ireland wrote requesting permission to pump water from the well at Castletownroche for use in their branch creamery. They required about 200 gallons daily and stated they could pump their needs each morning. River water was used for generating steam, but the Department required clean water for washing dairy utensils. Mr Daly supported the application. Mr Barry queried whether such use might risk polluting the well. Mr Russell said the matter required serious consideration, as the company might need a greater quantity of water than stated, and it should be determined whether this would affect the domestic supply. He also noted that no offer of payment had

been made. Mr O'Connor observed that refusal might lead to the creamery's closure and job losses. Mr Daly suggested supplying the water during early hours, when the public had less demand. It was decided to defer consideration of the application.[66]

About a week later, as outlined in the '*Evening Echo*,' a rather contentious meeting of the Cork County Board of Health took place at Washington St. Courthouse, Cork city centre. The Department of Local Government forwarded its sanction for the engineering appointments that had previously been arranged, approving them for a period of one year. The appointments confirmed were: Mr. B. O'Flynn as engineer for the Southern Area and consulting engineer for the Northern and Western Areas; Mr. J.J. O'Crowley as engineer to the Western Area; and Mr. P. Coughlan as engineer for the Northern Area. In the Northern Area, the appointments of D.J. Buckley and Jerh. Linehan as clerks of works were also sanctioned. The Department indicated it was still awaiting nominations for clerks of works in the Western and Southern Areas. Mr. O'Flynn submitted a letter requesting that he be granted a travelling allowance (mileage) for work undertaken within his former district, South Cork. He pointed out that although his prevailing terms only allow mileage for travel outside that district, additional duties have since been assigned to him within it—specifically, the supervision of cottage repair specifications and inspection of each dwelling before final payment certificates are issued. These tasks, he noted, required considerable travel. He also reminded the Board that his salary should have been backdated to October 1926, the date he began these duties. It was agreed, on the motion of Capt. Collins, to request the Department's approval for these conditions. Notification was received from the Department in connection with a request from the Southern Committee of the Board of Health to hold a sworn inquiry into the salaries of all officers of the Board. Mr. J.A. Jacobson, Inspector, had been appointed to conduct the inquiry under oath. The purpose of the inquiry is to determine what level of staffing and remuneration is appropriate and reasonable for both the

[66] *Cork Examiner 5/4/1927*

County Board of Public Health and the three County Boards of Public Assistance. Advance notice of the time and place of the inquiry will be provided. Mr. Broderick welcomed the announcement, noting that it fulfilled the Board's request. Mr. Daly expressed disappointment that the committee had been unable to reach a direct settlement with the officers, as they had originally hoped. It was agreed that representatives of the Board and its committees would meet to prepare their case ahead of the inquiry. The Board also approved the West Cork Regional Committee's recommendation to extend Mr. O'Callaghan's services for a further twelve months. He is to continue as clerical assistant in the office and as checker of the books and accounts of collectors of cottage rents, water charges, and burial fees, pending approval by the County Board and the Minister for Local Government and Public Health. Additionally, the Board approved the temporary appointment of a Clerk of Works for the Castletownbere District and the appointment of Edmond Young as temporary Sanitary Sub-Officer for the Ballydehob District.[67]

Following on from this meeting, the '*Cork Examiner*' reported that the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, having requested the Department of Local Government to hold a sworn inquiry into the salaries of the Board's officials with a view to revision and reduction, had its request granted. An inspector had been appointed, and an inquiry under oath was to be conducted to determine what staff would be appropriate for the Board's offices, and what salaries would have been sufficient and reasonable for the officers. The inquiry was also be extended to the newly formed Boards of Public Assistance. The paper suggested that this development clearly indicated that the Board recognised the need for supposed reductions and economies in the management of its affairs, yet was evidently unwilling to assume responsibility for implementing such changes on its own. The paper noted that there was once a strong outcry against the Local Authorities (Public Appointments) Act, which removed the power of appointing local officials from the hands of local authorities. However, the prevailing actions of the County Board, in its view, served as a fairly

[67] *Evening Echo 11/4/1927*

adequate response to those criticisms. By requesting intervention, the Board effectively conceded that certain aspects of local public appointments, both in terms of number and salary, were appropriate matters for the jurisdiction of the Department of Local Government.[68]

On the same day, the '*Evening Echo*' documented that an adjourned meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health took place at the Courthouse in Cork. Mr. P. J. Bradley chaired the meeting. Before beginning the business, the Chairman requested that the Secretary be instructed to write to the contractor responsible for the Ballincollig sewerage scheme, urging them to proceed with the work as quickly as possible. He emphasised that the local community was experiencing hardship due to a lack of employment and wanted to avoid any further tragedies. The Secretary responded that the contractor was eager to begin work immediately. The Chairman added that any technical issues delaying the project should be resolved promptly, as minor obstacles should not hold up such important work when employment was urgently needed. The Secretary said he would communicate with Mr. Flynn, the engineer, to accelerate the progress of the scheme. Mr. Buckley inquired about the status of the cottage repairs. Mr. Barry, the Clerk of Works, reported that progress had been slow. In particular, a contractor named Crowley had only repaired eleven cottages out of the fifty-seven he had contracted to work on about eight weeks earlier. The bond had only been signed the previous day. Mr. Buckley suggested that the Secretary should write to the contractor to highlight the delay and, if the repairs were not expedited, the Board should enforce the penalty bond.

The Rent Collector, Mr. Kendrick, reported that six cottage tenants had refused to pay the increased rent. Five tenants were asked to pay 2s. 6d. a week, while the sixth, a milk vendor, was asked to pay 7s. 3d. The Secretary noted that the five tenants paying 2s. 6d. included a carpenter and a blacksmith. The Chairman agreed they should revert to the original rent of 1s. a week, as such tradesmen were often out

[68] *Cork Examiner 13/4/1927*

of work in rural areas. The Committee decided to return to the old rent of 1s. a week for those five tenants, and for the milk vendor they agreed to discuss a fair rent arrangement. Attention was drawn to a tenant who owed over £12 in rent and who had avoided a court order because the cottage had not been repaired. Although the necessary repairs were completed, the tenant refused to pay until further improvements, such as an entrance gate, were made. Mr. Buckley questioned whether the tenant also wanted bars installed on the windows. Several other tenants owed similarly large sums, according to Collector Scanlan, who said these were only examples of those with significant arrears. The Secretary was instructed to write to all such tenants, informing them that unless they paid the outstanding sums within a reasonable time, legal action would be taken to recover possession of the cottages.

The Committee considered two applicants for a vacant cottage. One applicant had a wife and three young children, while the other was a bachelor but cared for his mother. The bachelor argued that while he could find a wife easily, he could not find a mother. The Chairman remarked that finding a wife might not be so simple. Ultimately, the cottage was allocated to the family man. The Committee decided to advertise for two rent collector positions in the Cork No. 1 and Cork No. 4 districts, offering a remuneration rate of ten per cent. Similar advertisements were planned for sanitary sub-officer positions in the Cork No. 1 and Macroom No. 2 districts. The Secretary reported that the salary for Cork No. 1 was £27 per annum, rising by £1 annually to £40, while for Macroom No. 2 it was £10 per year with an added bonus. It was agreed to advertise the Cork No. 1 position at the previous salary without increments, and the Macroom No. 2 position at £10 without bonus. Maurice Power was appointed curator of the original water works, succeeding his late father George, at a salary of £7 per annum. An earlier appointment of William Motherway as gatekeeper of the burial ground at Poulmount had been referred back to the Committee by the County Board of Health and was sent back again for reconsideration. Mr. Buckley referred to complaints about unsanitary conditions on Victoria Avenue and Wallace Avenue that had appeared in the Press. He suggested the

Board should request a report from their engineer to determine whether these areas were indeed insanitary and whether the Board bore responsibility. An order was passed to this effect.

Mr. Ahern drew the meeting's attention to a leading article in that day's "*Examiner*" relating to the sworn inquiry into staffing and salaries of the Cork Board of Health and Boards of Public Assistance. He asked whether the Committee had authority to reduce the salaries of any officers. The Secretary replied that this issue would be addressed at the upcoming inquiry. Mr. Ahern expressed concern that the article implied the Board lacked moral courage in handling its officials, suggesting the Board was reluctant to take responsibility for administrative challenges involving economy and efficiency, especially where local or personal influences might affect decisions. The implication was that the Board avoided cutting salaries when officials had friends among the members, although the Board actually had no power to reduce salaries. The Secretary confirmed that transferred officers were guaranteed salaries not less than what they had received under the former boards. Mr. O'Donoghue added that attempts had been made to reduce salaries, but these efforts had been met with resistance. Mr. Carey commented that a policy of indiscriminately dismissing staff would not benefit the country. Mr. Ahern concluded that the article seemed to say the Board had no objection to salaries being fixed externally but objected to external control over appointments.[69]

Approximately two weeks later, as referred to by the '*Kerry Reporter*,' regarding a proposal to purchase the married quarters at Buttevant Military Barracks for housing, Mr. Mee Regan, Secretary of the Northern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, received a message from Mr. T. Cassidy, Secretary to the Board of Public Works. The message indicated that the Northern Committee was invited to submit a definite offer for the houses, which could serve as a basis for negotiations. Alternatively, if the Committee preferred to discuss the matter further, the chief valuer was

[69] *Evening Echo 13/4/1927*

willing to arrange a meeting at the office with Mr. J. Daly, T.D., to address the issue in full. It was understood that the Northern Committee would consider and deal with the matter at its next meeting.[70]

In late April, the '*Southern Star*,' mentioned that Meetings of the Western Committee of the Cork County Board of Health and the Board of Assistance for the same area took place at the County Home, Clonakilty, Co. Cork. Mr. McCarthy chaired both meetings, with attendees including Messrs. T. J. Murphy, T.D.; D. McCarthy from Dunmanway; Patrick O'Donovan; Timothy Sheehy; D. O'Callaghan; B. Hourihan; and Jeremiah McCarthy from Schull. Applications for the temporary clerk of works position in the Castletownbere district were received from Denis D. Sheehan of Croom, Co. Limerick; Thomas J. Hourihan from Main Street, Bantry; James Harrington from Castletown; and James Mullins from Castletownbere. It was noted that Denis Sheehan had questioned the advertised salary of 10 shillings per week as being a mistake, which drew laughter. The chairman commented that it would be a long journey from Croom for such pay. The committee unanimously appointed James Mullins to the position. They agreed to take steps to improve the water supply at Ballineen following arrangements made by the engineer. Regarding the Cork County Board of Health's affairs, the secretary replied to a query that the accounts had not yet been audited. Mr. Murphy proposed, seconded by Mr. O'Donovan, that the Local Government Department be asked to arrange an early audit of the Cork Board of Health's accounts.

The Department highlighted the poor condition of cottage rent collection in West Cork. Since their last communication, the outstanding arrears had risen from £3,501 to £4,118, with arrears continuing to accumulate at £100 per month. They requested immediate action to reduce the overdue amounts. The secretary reported some improvement since March. The assistant secretary stated that at the end of the half-year, total arrears stood at £3,333 8s. 1d., a reduction of £166 15s. 9d. compared to the previous half-year. The chairman noted that

[70] *Kerry Reporter 16/4/1927*

except for Dunmanway, collection in all districts was satisfactory, and urged collectors to prioritise clearing arrears. Home Assistant Officer Hurley said he had seen little distress in Ardfield, encountering and attending to only three cases. Superintendent Gilhooly had visited the parish priest who reported many families in difficulty and said he supplied names to the Home Assistance Officer. Hurley confirmed the priest had only given him three cases, which he was attending. Mr. Murphy said local people had organised a fund to help such cases. Although there was considerable distress along the coast, he was confident that officials were fulfilling their duties. While distress was expected at the time, he did not believe starvation existed and trusted the officers to handle any serious situation properly.

The chairman said he had investigated the reported distress in Ardfield and found that the locals resented the suggestion. In the mountainous areas, people preferred not to seek home assistance, valuing their pride and independence. He believed that improvement works underway would be the best way to help those in need in a district known for industry and progress. Ardfield residents regretted being compared to areas with actual distress, noting their land was fertile and they worked hard. Difficulties had been caused by mine closures which had employed many locals, but they hoped this situation would be temporary. The Board and officials were committed to protecting the poor and preventing want anywhere. Mr. Murphy responded to statements made at a Clonakilty Urban Council meeting about his actions in raising concerns for the town's poor. He affirmed he would always advocate for the poor and people. The Secretary's evidence had shown that despite his and the Board's orders, some cases received inadequate attention. The Board dealt with the responsible officer and, as a result, the issue in Dunmanway was exposed. Mr. Murphy explained that the Board inherited the poor conditions in Dunmanway and took measures to improve the situation. They would act firmly against any official neglecting duties. The people of Clonakilty had suffered unfairly, but he would not tolerate such treatment. He rejected calls for a vote of confidence from a Board official before the Urban Council, stating that such matters should be handled internally. He concluded that

he had always acted honestly and fearlessly and would continue to do so, earning applause. The chairman praised Mr. Murphy's reliable public service, and the matter ended.

An audit report from Mr. M. Conlan, Local Government Auditor, covered the West Cork County Board of Public Assistance's accounts from 1 May 1924 to 31 March 1926. It summarised expenditure on the home and hospitals, home assistance payments, and total Board spending for four six-month periods. Spending on treatment and maintenance outside West Cork rose from £8 16s. 0d. in the period ending 30 September 1924 to £840 19s. 2d. in the half-year ending 31 March 1926. The report suggested savings could be made without harming those needing assistance. The value of assets acquired from separate unions by the Board on 30 April 1924 was £1,929 15s. 0d., and the Cork County Council was to credit the unions with their respective asset values. The Board received £609 11s. 4d. in April 1925 as compensation for the destruction of the Schull Workhouse, which was to be paid to the County Council alongside £118 0s. 10d. from rents. A loan for rebuilding Skibbereen Hospital had been paid to the County Council by the Ministry of Finance in June 1924, which should have discharged the loan and closed the account. The Board of Health area should be credited with interest charged after June 1924.

The Board paid £29 13s. 4d. in October 1924 for an instalment and interest on the Ballineen and Timoleague dispensaries loan, which appeared to be a debt owed to the County Council. The late Dunmanway Board of Guardians and the West Cork County Board of Health had not received rent for the Johnstown dispensary residence since March 1920; appropriate steps were to be taken to recover the amount. Bonds for Home Assistance Officers Connolly, Hurley, and Cors O'Sullivan were missing and needed replacement, as did a new bond for Mrs. McCarthy. No stocktaking instructions were issued for the period ending 30 September 1924. All male inmates at the Clonakilty Home and Hospital received tobacco allowances, though it was suggested that the medical officer should recommend when such an allowance was appropriate. Registers for Skibbereen

County Hospital and death records before 1925 were not produced. The stocktaker's report for Bantry District Hospital was unreliable, and it was suggested that payment should be withheld if duties were not satisfactorily performed. Provision quantities matched indoor stock records. However, there was no coal stock recorded on 31 March 1926, despite daily coal use until 11 April and a new coal supply arriving then. Clothing conversion books prior to September 1924 and other registers were incomplete.

At the meeting of the West Cork Board of Health and Public Assistance, chaired by Mr. Callaghan McCarthy, a dispute arose regarding tenancy of a cottage in Kilkerran, Clonakilty district. The chairman claimed a man named White had forcibly taken possession. White had previously received permission to occupy the cottage, but the chairman argued that the Board had no authority to grant such permission. He announced he would not tolerate the situation and insisted possession be obtained and a tenant legally appointed. The chairman left the chair and room, but members, particularly Mr. Sheehy, urged him to stay. An argument followed, during which the chairman paced the room insisting he would not allow "blackguarding in cottages," suspending business for ten minutes. Eventually, it was agreed to discuss the matter fully at the next meeting with a motion to rescind White's tenancy order. When the chairman resumed, a similar issue arose from a letter by Jeremiah Hourihane, who claimed to have taken possession of a vacant cottage in Dunmanway district in February 1927. The chairman declared that Hourihane had no right to enter, and should be prosecuted. Hourihane explained that arrears on the cottage amounted to £14. The cottage was in poor condition but had recently been repaired. Unable to pay arrears in full, Hourihane offered to pay only those accrued after taking possession. The chairman dismissed this as insufficient.[71]

In early May, a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the Courthouse, presided over by Mr T. Corcoran, Chairman. The Secretary presented the County Board of Health's recent decision

[71] *Southern Star 30/4/1927*

regarding the appointment of clerks of works. The Board had declined to increase the allowance from £500 to £600. Mr Corry proposed that the recommendation be returned to the County Board for reconsideration. Mr Ahern argued that it was unfair to quibble over a difference of £60 or £100 in such cases. Mr Bradley agreed and added that the southern district had not been receiving its fair share. The Chairman stated that the committee was doing its utmost, with no other interest but to act fairly. Mr Ahern suggested that two committee members should personally meet with the County Board to fully discuss the matter. Mr Bradley stated that the work would be greatly facilitated if the full amount were approved. Mr Corry's proposal was adopted, and the recommendation was sent back accordingly. The Chairman confirmed he would attend the County Board meeting and present the committee's views.

Mr Ahern inquired about the delay in addressing a nuisance opposite the new church at Mogeely. The Engineer replied that he could not take action until he received notice from the Public Health Committee. The Secretary noted that the County Board had not yet approved the relevant recommendation. Mr Ahern commented, "We might as well abolish the Senate—they're only hindering progress." The Engineer promised to review the matter and see if it could proceed. Mr Buckley raised the issue of the water supply in Blarney, which had been discussed a year ago but deferred. He asked if Mr O'Flynn had any new recommendations, as the residents were in dire need of a proper supply. The Engineer explained that previous proposals were rejected due to cost, but he had a new scheme in mind. If the committee authorised an expenditure of about £1 for investigation, he would proceed. When asked about the nature of the new scheme, Mr O'Flynn stated he intended to pump water from the area near Purdon's Bridge, where he believed there was a high likelihood of locating a reliable supply in the nearby valley. Mr Bradley and Mr Buckley simultaneously proposed that Mr O'Flynn be given the authority to investigate, and this was agreed upon. A tenant who complained about delays in repairing her cottage was assured by the Engineer that she had no reason for concern, as specifications had been completed. She responded that the previous Board had

abandoned her, and she feared the prevailing one might do the same.

The Local Government Department forwarded extracts from the half-yearly report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Bandon dispensary district. The M.O.H. reported the complete absence of a scavenging system in the district, stressing the urgent need for one to maintain clean yards. He had raised this issue on many occasions, stating, in his view, it was essential in any civilised community. At that time, householders relied on the goodwill of local authorities to remove manure. He urged that a public scavenging system be introduced immediately, involving the placement of refuse boxes outside homes for collection three times a week. He also noted the lack of proper toilet facilities, especially for smaller houses, and recommended installing shared closets and urinals—one set for every six to twelve houses. A public urinal and toilet were greatly needed in the town centre. He further recommended updated regulations for pig-keeping, suggesting they be housed only outside town boundaries. More frequent inspections of town yards were also advised. The Secretary explained they had no formal register of pig-keepers. A town scavenger would cost approximately £2 to £3 per week. The Engineer saw no objection to hiring a scavenger for Bandon, funded through local rates. If the committee wished, he would draw up a specification. This proposal was approved, and Dr Hennessy, M.O.H., was asked to compile a list of pig-keepers.

Mr Bradley highlighted the poor condition of roads in Cork's suburbs and the associated dust nuisance. He described it as hazardous to residents, who could not open windows for fresh air without dust entering their homes. He proposed a strong recommendation be sent to the County Council, urging immediate remedial action. The Chairman noted there was an agreement with the Tramway Company to water the road along their line. Mr Bradley responded that this only applied to one road. The main concerns were College Road, Glasheen Road, Douglas, and surrounding areas. He stressed that, as the health authority, the committee had the power to compel the County Council to eliminate this public health nuisance. The Secretary read a circular from the Department

regarding a diarrhoea epidemic, which had cited dust accumulation as a breeding ground for flies and a cause of food contamination. Dr O'Sullivan had attributed several infectious diseases to road dust. Mr Bradley insisted they take firm action beyond passing mere resolutions. He advocated for proper road surfacing or other effective dust-suppression measures. The Chairman acknowledged the issue, noting that residents could not open their windows in summer. He called the dust problem a serious hazard, made worse by the increasing number of buses. Mr O'Donoghue asked for a solution. The Chairman suggested road improvements. Mr Bradley recommended tar spraying as the most effective remedy. He emphasised that these suburbs were significant rate-paying areas and deserved fair treatment. He proposed that the Engineer liaise with the County Surveyor to formulate a plan to tackle the nuisance. Mr Buckley seconded this. The Engineer confirmed that Douglas and College Roads were the worst affected. The Engineer was instructed to consult with the County Surveyor and pursue the issue until a resolution was achieved.

The committee appointed the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Mr Corry to attend a joint conference concerning staffing and salaries in the offices. Mr Bradley's motion to extend the Lough sewer, at a cost of £225 as recommended by the Engineer, was approved—pending funding. His proposal to implement the water scheme at Ballinhassig was also accepted. The Chairman's motion to extend the Ballinlough Road sewer by 60 yards at a cost of £58 received similar approval. On Mr Corry's proposal, the committee agreed to advertise for tenders to provide a water supply to Ballyphillip, to be funded by the Cork Rural District. They also decided to seek tenders for improvements to Bandon's water supply, estimated at £1,080.[72]

In June 1927, at the Council Chamber of Cork Courthouse, Mr J.A. Gleeson, Local Government Inspector, resumed the sworn inquiry to determine the appropriate staffing for the offices of the Cork County Board of Health and its three Committees—North, South, and West—as well as for the

[72] *Cork Examiner 12/5/1927*

three County Boards of Public Assistance. The purpose was also to establish what would constitute fair and reasonable salaries for the relevant officers. Mr A.H. Exham represented the Cork County Board of Health; Mr F.L. Blake represented the South Cork Board of Public Assistance; and Mr John J. Morgan appeared on behalf of the officials, who were members of the Irish Local Government Officials' Union.

Mr Daniel Healy, temporary clerical officer for both the South Cork Board of Public Assistance and the Board of Health, gave evidence regarding his duties. He had eight years of prior experience in commercial office work before entering public service in October 1921. He held a gold medal in bookkeeping. His remuneration amounted to £2 from each body, and there had been no changes to his salary or terms of employment. He received three weeks of annual leave and had been absent due to illness for three days. He was employed full-time, working from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., typically finishing around 6.30 p.m., sometimes later. He was entitled to a lunch break from 12.30 to 2 p.m. His appointment had not been made through a competitive examination. He described his duties in detail to the inquiry. Mr David Herlihy was the next to give evidence. He had joined the service on 24 June 1925 at the age of eighteen under the Board of Public Assistance, and on 26 July under the Board of Health. His appointment to the Board of Assistance had been made by Commissioner O'Farrell. He had no prior experience, and his appointment had not involved a competitive examination. His starting salary was two guineas per week, now split between the two Boards, each paying one guinea. He had received three weeks' holiday and had been ill for a week. His office hours were from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and he reported being fully occupied. Responding to questions from the Inspector about the filing system, he stated that any document in the Secretary's office could be located immediately.

Mr Egan, Secretary to the Southern Board of Health, was recalled. In response to Mr Exham, he explained that the reduction in his annual salary from £1,120 in January 1925 to £707 was due to extraordinary circumstances in 1924 related to immigration registration fees. That year, each immigrant

had to provide two certificates for passport applications, which had temporarily inflated the fees. To illustrate the workload, Mr Egan stated that the postal bill for the previous year was £131 2s., excluding a large amount of correspondence that had been hand-delivered. Additionally, his office managed correspondence for 3,665 labourers' cottages. Mr Blake presented a resolution passed by the Board of Public Assistance on 11 May, which discontinued the employment of several temporary assistants. The resolution further stated that, if their services were later found to be necessary, the positions would be filled by competitive examination.

Addressing whether the inquiry covered the staff of the matron's department at the South Cork County Home and Hospital, the Inspector stated that to do so properly would require an in-depth review of the entire county institution. For this reason, he ruled that the consideration of those officers was beyond the scope of the prevailing inquiry. Nevertheless, he would note any discussion on the topic and report it to the Minister. The City Commissioner, Mr. Philip Monahan, said he saw no need for an in-depth examination, as the matron's staff had been in place for years without changes due to amalgamation or other developments. Mr Exham argued that the question of potential surplus staff in the matron's department had a direct bearing on whether the three temporary assistants should be retained in the Secretary's office. The Inspector agreed in principle but reiterated that until the redundancy or necessity of the prevailing clerical officers across the Boards had been determined, he could not consider the matron's staff. A proper assessment would require examining the full staffing needs of the institution, potentially excluding other county institutions. Mr Exham further submitted that if there were permanent officials under the Board of Public Assistance whose services were not needed in their prevailing department but could be usefully transferred elsewhere, that should be part of the inquiry. This would allow the retention of pensionable permanent staff rather than replacing them with temporary assistants. The Inspector acknowledged that this issue merited serious consideration by the relevant authorities, but maintained that it fell outside the formal

scope of the prevailing inquiry for the reasons already given. He added that determining the appropriate staff for the matron's department would necessitate reviewing that institution comprehensively. Mr Exham requested that the Inspector report his view to the Ministry for further consideration.

Mr William J. Broderick, M.C.C., Chairman of the County Board of Health, stated that the Board was at a significant disadvantage, having only recently assumed administrative control following a period of heavy oversight by several Commissioners.[73]

By the end of the month, a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the Courthouse, at which Mr T. Corcoran (Chairman) presided. Two tenders were received for sewer-laying works at Monloe, Blackrock—one at £704 and another at £734. The engineer had estimated the cost at £750. The committee decided to accept the lower tender from Jerh. Murphy of North Abbey Street, Cork. For scavenging duties in the St Mary's district, two tenders were submitted—one for £76 and another for £38 10s. The lower tender, from Bartholomew Murphy of Pouladuff Road, Ballycurreen, was accepted. Mr Carey raised concerns about the poor condition of water pipes in Ballinacurra, urging immediate attention to ensure an adequate water supply in the affected area. It was agreed to contact the Local Government Department to clarify which body was responsible for maintaining the pipes. The committee accepted several tenders for cottage repair work across various districts. Mr Corry proposed that tenants be given the opportunity to carry out repairs themselves, at prices set by the clerk of works. The Chairman agreed that this could be done in cases where no tenders had been received or where the submitted tenders were too high. The clerk of works was instructed to ask tenants whether they would be willing to undertake the repairs. The meeting then turned to the reconsideration of applications for the positions of rent collectors and sanitary sub-officers. The Chairman asked for an update on the application process.

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[73] *Evening Echo 22/6/1927*

The Secretary explained that some applications had been reviewed at the previous meeting, which had resulted in a decision to re-advertise the positions. A new batch of applications had since been received. Before the applications were considered, Mr Corry requested that a motion in his name, included on the agenda, be addressed first. The Chairman allowed it.

Mr Corry moved that the remuneration payable to any cottage rent collector appointed ought to be set at 5 per cent commission on all rents collected and lodged. He explained that previously, the rate had been 5 per cent, and the committee should return to this structure. Given the limited funds available for cottage maintenance, this change would allow savings that could be reinvested in repairs and upkeep. He argued that ratepayers were under severe financial pressure and that it was essential to economise. Mr Carey opposed the motion, calling it a mean-spirited attempt to take advantage of people's financial hardship by reducing wages. Mr Corry denied this, stating that some rent collectors earned up to 80 shillings per week or £3 per month for as little as two days' work. One individual, O'Riordan, had even expressed willingness to work at 5 per cent commission. Corry insisted that cuts were necessary to ensure proper stewardship of funds. Mr Carey repeated that the proposal was exploiting poverty. The motion received no seconder, which Mr Corry described as an extraordinary situation. The exchange became heated.

Mr Carey reiterated that it was, in his view, an unfair move against poor people. Mr Corry defended himself, saying he had more genuine interest in the people than Mr Carey. Mr Carey retorted, "I don't believe a damned word of it." Mr Corry insisted the public had shown their support for his approach.

Mr Brasier added that the duties of rent collectors had recently expanded—they now had to visit cottages with bond forms in hand—and were, in fact, among the lowest-paid officials in service. Mr Corry questioned whether any rent collector had ever reported a cottage in need of repair. The Chairman replied that it was not his responsibility to provide

that information. Mr Corry then asked if the Secretary had ever received such reports, expressing doubt that any had been submitted. Mr Bradley noted that it had previously been agreed that rent collectors were expected to report any cottages requiring repair to the clerk of works to ensure timely maintenance.[74]

During mid-July, as reported by the '*Cork Examiner*,' a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, chaired by Mr W.J. Broderick, was adjourned as a mark of respect to the late Mr Kevin O'Higgins, Minister for Justice and Local Government, who was assassinated. Upon taking his seat, the Chairman addressed the meeting, stating that they met under the shadow of one of the most appalling tragedies in the history of the country. The assassination of Mr O'Higgins, a prominent national figure, while on his way to worship, was an act so shocking and sorrowful that words scarcely sufficed to express its impact. A young man, full of life and vigour, was suddenly taken from his family and from public service. The Chairman noted that the personal loss to Mr O'Higgins's wife and children was immense, and the act had allegedly left a stain on the national character that would take years to remove. He went on to say that, although the country had become somewhat hardened to tragedies during the troubled years, the last three or four years of relative peace had offered hope that the past was behind them. However, this dreadful event brought back a wave of despair and sorrow. He expressed the hope that, despite its horror, this might mark the final chapter in such a dark era.

Mr John Daly, T.D., described the assassination as a sad and shameful blow to the Irish people. He referred to Mr O'Higgins as one of the brightest sons of Ireland—one of the finest men the country had ever produced—and a worthy representative of an illustrious and patriotic family. He proposed that the Board extend its deepest sympathies to Mrs O'Higgins, to the President, and to the Executive Council, all of whom represented the Irish nation. As likely the first public meeting in the country since the tragedy, Mr Daly said it was fitting that they adjourn in honour of a great national

[74] *Evening Echo 29/6/1927*

figure, whose family brought pride to both Cork and the Irish race. Mr T. Corcoran seconded the motion. He said that every God-fearing person would have been moved by the sudden and dreadful news. Murder was always abhorrent, but the fact that Mr O'Higgins met his death while on his way to worship made it especially tragic. Mr Corcoran expressed confidence that his remarks would be endorsed by all members present and by good citizens across the country, regardless of political views. Mr Corns. Buckley also expressed his support for the vote of condolence.

Mr Maurice Murphy, noted as the only Republican member present, said he felt compelled to offer his own remarks. He stated that he deeply deplored what had happened and condemned the killing of any man. The circumstances of Mr O'Higgins's death, he said, were especially tragic and abhorrent. While he differed with the late Minister politically, he acknowledged that Mr O'Higgins likely believed he was acting in Ireland's best interests—just as Mr Murphy himself believed he was doing in his own way. He stressed that it was a shameful act that stained the name of Ireland. The Board's Secretary, Mr E. Callanan, and the law agent, Mr Exham, also associated themselves with the vote of condolence. The motion of condolence was then passed in silence, after which the meeting was formally adjourned.[75]

A fresh meeting of the Cork County Board of Public Health took place the following week, at which William J. Broderick once again presided. The Chairman reported that the County Council intended to initiate the dissolution of the West Cork Committee of Public Assistance. However, this action would require the support of two-thirds of the Council members present at the relevant meeting.Discussion then turned to the ongoing issue concerning the subdivision of the Southern area for the purpose of carrying out repairs to labourers' cottages. Mr. Egan (Secretary of the Southern Committee) stated that the Board of Health had reduced the proposed total payment to clerks of works from £600 to £500, and the clerks had responded that they could not undertake the job for less than £600. Mr. R. Daly explained that the Board

[75] *Cork Examiner 12/7/1927*

initially set the figure at £500, but the Southern Committee had rejected it and referred the matter back. The Board, however, stood by their original decision. He insisted that there was no justification for revising the arrangement now and stressed that the repairs should proceed without further delay.

Mr. J. Daly stated that the original recommendation was to divide the work into two districts and to appoint two clerks of works—both competent men who had already been appointed and were willing to undertake the work. The Board had previously accepted Mr. O'Flynn's proposal regarding the division and salary (£500 in total), and there was no reason to deviate from that decision. He noted the estimates had been trimmed down and insisted that two clerks were sufficient."The Board of Health is not a benevolent society," Mr. Daly stated. "There is no justification for appointing a third man when two are enough."

The Chairman, however, responded that the priority must be ensuring the repairs are actually carried out. He noted that the Board had been reviewing how best to create a more efficient system of administration. If two clerks could not handle the volume of work, then appointing a third would be a matter of common sense. Mr. R. Daly disagreed, asserting that "I still hold that two men are sufficient."

Mr. O'Flynn, B.E., informed the Board that approximately 180 cottages were repaired each year within the Cork rural district. Mr. Egan outlined the proposed district divisions:

- District No. 1: Rural districts of Youghal and part of Cork, east of the main road from Dunkettle, to the Watergrasshill boundary of the northern area.
- District No. 2: The rural districts of Macroom, Bandon, Kinsale, and the remaining portion of the Co. Cork district.

Mr. R. Daly reiterated that the Board had already accepted Mr. O'Flynn's recommendations and that no valid reason had been presented to depart from them. He implied that the only motive behind a proposed third appointment was to create an unnecessary position.

Addressing the issue of compensation, Mr. Daly emphasised that payment levels were the responsibility of the Board. The Chairman asked what payment model had been suggested. Mr. Egan responded:

- District No. 1: 10% of contract value
- District No. 2: 60% of contract value

Mr. O'Flynn added that the Southern Committee believed the division might be too large for two clerks, but the Chairman concluded that in any case, the role was only a twelve-month job.[76]

In August, at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held in the Council Chamber at the Courthouse, Cork, with Mr. William J. Broderick presiding as Chairman. Among those present were Captain J. Collins, and Messrs. John Daly, T.D.; R. Daly; D. Hinchin; and Tim Quill, T.D. The Board considered the recommendations from the Southern Committee, focusing on a contentious issue that had persisted across several meetings—the number of clerks of works to be appointed for overseeing repair work on labourers' cottages. The Southern Committee proposed hiring three clerks at a total salary of £600, a departure from the County Board's original decision to appoint two clerks at £500. Mr. R. Daly reiterated his longstanding opposition to the Southern Committee's proposal. He noted that over the previous five months, the Board had consistently decided to limit appointments to two clerks. According to Daly, the continued back-and-forth on this issue was wasteful, especially given that the work could supposedly be done for half the prevailing expenditure. He questioned why the committee was insisting on employing more staff than necessary, suggesting that no business owner would overstaff their own operations in such a way. Mr. J. Daly, T.D., added that if three men were hired for £600, one of them would effectively be working for £100—a rate that made no sense. Mr. O'Flynn argued that £300 per man wasn't a sufficient salary for the duties involved, but Mr. R. Daly countered by

[76] *Evening Echo 19/7/1927*

pointing out that even O'Flynn had previously supported the two-man plan, and as County Engineer, his judgement should carry weight.

Questions arose about whether or not clerks would receive travelling expenses, to which it was clarified that none were included. The Chairman summarised the situation by explaining that the Board of Health had approved the two-man plan at £500, while the Southern Committee wanted three men for £600. Captain Collins reminded the meeting that they were dealing with public funds, and it was their duty to keep costs down, not inflate them. He expressed concern that outside observers might consider the Board irresponsible. The Chairman replied that they needed only to be concerned with their own governance, not the opinion of outsiders. Collins maintained that they should trust the Engineer's recommendation. In response, J. Daly argued that the Board should not be blindly reliant on one official's judgement, implying that the members were capable of making independent assessments. The Chairman acknowledged that the Southern Committee had taken a logically consistent position by opposing the original scheme, and had sent a deputation to explain their reasoning. He proposed adjourning the matter until the deputation could attend. Captain Collins, however, dismissed the idea that any deputation—no matter how persuasive—would alter his view. J. Daly pointed out that the evidence favoured the committee's stance, but Collins rejected that evidence outright, insisting they were there to deliver savings. The Chairman noted that while economy was important, it must not come at the cost of efficiency. Mr. J. Daly likened ineffective cost-cutting to making a pudding without fat—unappetising and ultimately lacking substance. R. Daly maintained that their existing plan was both economical and efficient.

Later, Mr. J. Corcoran, a member of the Southern Committee, addressed the meeting. He stated that in their view, the geographical size of the area made it unmanageable for only two clerks. R. Daly challenged this, accusing Corcoran of advocating for a job for someone in particular. Corcoran firmly denied this, saying there was no job

arranged and that he had a deep knowledge of the county. F. Daly suggested the Engineer was in a better position to assess the requirements, but Corcoran disagreed. The Chairman asked for historical context, and Mr. Egan of the Southern Committee confirmed that six clerks of works had originally been employed, at a combined cost of £1,070. R. Daly pointed out that this situation had persisted for seven months already. J. Daly formally proposed that three clerks be appointed at £600, in line with the Southern Committee's view. Hinchin seconded the motion. In response, Captain Collins moved an amendment to stick to the original two-clerk plan at £500, seconded by R. Daly. During the debate, it was noted that there were 1,665 cottages in the Southern area. R. Daly responded that the critical issue was not the total number of cottages, but rather the number at that time under repair.

The Secretary, Mr. Callanan, informed the Board that the appointment of three clerks at £500 had already been agreed upon and recorded in the minutes. R. Daly questioned when this decision had been made, and the Chairman clarified that the Board had expressed no objection to appointing more clerks so long as the budget remained fixed. A vote was held on the amendment: Capt. Collins and R. Daly voted in favour (for the two-clerk plan), while J. Daly and D. Hinchin voted against. The Chairman voted with the latter, defeating the amendment. The Board ultimately resolved to appoint three clerks of works for a twelve-month period. These would be full-time, temporary positions, with one clerk receiving £270 per year, and the other two receiving £115 each, all salaries being inclusive of travelling expenses. To address concerns of political favouritism, Mr. Corcoran offered to support a public examination process. R. Daly suggested that the final decision on appointments be left to the County Engineer.[77]

A special meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the Courthouse to discuss a communication from the Minister for Local Government and Public Health. This letter conveyed the Minister's findings following an inquiry conducted by Mr Gleeson, an inspector from the Department.

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[77] *Evening Echo 8/8/1927*

The inquiry had been initiated in response to a resolution passed by the Southern Committee of the Board on 11 February 1927. The resolution requested a review and potential reduction of salaries for all Board officials. The inquiry aimed to assess appropriate staffing levels and reasonable salary scales for the Board's offices, including those of the three County Boards of Public Assistance. While the inquiry had initially been scheduled for 24 May 1927, it was postponed at the request of a joint conference of the concerned Boards, allowing for more time to prepare evidence. However, the Minister expressed disappointment that, despite this extra time, only one member—Mr William Broderick, chairman of both the County Board of Public Health and the South Cork Board of Public Assistance—presented evidence. The Boards failed to submit a detailed explanation or recommendations during the inquiry, which, according to the Minister, significantly hindered the ability to reach informed decisions. Regarding the secretaries of the County Boards, the Minister acknowledged that Mr Regan and Mr Spiller had previously served as Clerks of Union before the introduction of the Cork County scheme. Despite their prevailing salaries exceeding those typically approved for new entrants, the Minister deemed reductions inappropriate due to their service history. In contrast, Mr Egan, Secretary to the South Cork County Board, had previously served as an assistant clerk and was now in a more senior and responsible position. While recognising the upgrade in his duties and his conprevailing role as Superintendent Registrar, the Minister proposed a total inclusive salary of £750. Mr Egan was expected to remit any registration-related fees to the Board. The Minister believed Mr Egan’s office already had a sufficient number of permanent staff and saw no justification for retaining three temporary clerks—Cornelius Conroy, Daniel Healy, and David Herlihy. He recommended that their employment be terminated. The Minister then outlined what he considered reasonable salaries for the remaining permanent clerks in the South Cork office:

- John McCarthy: £350/year
- Richard Sheehan: £290/year
- Bartholomew Curtin: £200/year

- Richard Flavin: £300/year
- Edward Murphy: £300/year
- Miss May Ambrose: £156/year

He recommended that these rates be implemented immediately. For the North and West Cork Boards, the Minister deemed prevailing staffing levels appropriate. The proposed salaries were as follows:

North Cork:

- H. H. Hanley: £300/year
- Maurice Daly: £300/year
- J. F. O'Connor: £250/year
- P. J. Dennehy (temporary): £150/year, increasing by £10 annually to a maximum of £200/year

West Cork:

- James O'Mahony: £250/year
- Miss Una Murphy: £200/year
- Patrick Byrne: £200/year
- Miss Mary C. Cotter: £96/year

The Minister clarified that these salaries were personal to the prevailing post-holders and would be reviewed upon vacancy. The salaries covered all work carried out for both the Public Health Board and Boards of Public Assistance. He suggested that, for rating purposes, a two-thirds to one-third split between Poor Law and Public Health services be used, reflecting the relative workload. At the meeting, chaired by Mr William J. Broderick, the members expressed concern over perceived staffing inequities. Mr Egan pointed out that, prior to restructuring, his office had a staff of 14, now reduced to 7 under the Minister's plan. While other regions were gaining three additional clerks, he was to receive only one extra clerk, despite his significantly larger area and valuation base—twice that of North Cork and four times that of West Cork. The Chairman suggested it was premature to make final decisions, and proposed distributing the Minister's report to all relevant members and officials for thorough review. He noted that certain recommendations in the report—particularly those requiring immediate pay adjustments—were presented as definitive.

Mr J. J. Horgan, solicitor for the officials, argued that the terms of the 1923 Transfer of Officers Order guaranteed officials the same pay and conditions post-transfer. He maintained that any reduction was therefore unlawful. Mr Egan's superannuation, he added, might even exceed the proposed salary. Members, including Mr Daly, supported the view that Mr Egan's increased responsibilities warranted more than one additional assistant and that salary reductions were unjustified, particularly given the expanded workload since the amalgamation of multiple unions. Concerns were also raised over the proposed dismissal of the three temporary clerks. Mr Egan stated he could not manage the office without them. The Chairman agreed, arguing that the clerks had become integral to the office and were effectively permanent by necessity. He urged against their abrupt removal, highlighting that Mr Egan would soon need to prepare detailed estimates for the upcoming administrative year—something that could not be done without adequate staffing. Mr Daly further emphasised that these clerks were being trained and would likely become future permanent officials. Mr McCarthy pointed out that they were originally hired during the Commissioner's administration, indicating their long-standing necessity. In conclusion, the Chairman proposed, and Capt. Collins seconded, a resolution stating that the temporary clerks of the South Cork Boards be retained for the time being to support the preparation of annual estimates, and various other administrative needs. Additionally, it was suggested that the Minister should be requested to continue paying their salaries, until a permanent decision could be made.[78]

In October 1927, at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health held at the Washington St. Courthouse, Mr. William J. Broderick (chairman) presided. The first item of business was the selection of a new vice-chairman following the death of Mr. Corns. O'Callaghan. Mr. Hinchin proposed and Mr. Daly, T.D., seconded the motion to appoint Capt. Collins as vice-chairman, which was passed unanimously. The meeting then addressed a letter from the Ministry of Local

[78] *Cork Examiner 28/9/1927*

Government and Public Health, previously published, concerning staff requirements and salary levels for the board's office and the three County Boards of Public Assistance. The letter also included decisions based on evidence gathered by the Department's Inspector, Mr. Gleeson. The purpose was to determine appropriate staffing and salaries for officers and to consider recommendations from the Northern, Southern, and Western Committees. The Chairman noted that the joint conference's recommendations did not align with those from the Department in several instances. He emphasised the board should base their decisions on their own assessments and address each case individually, considering both the conference and Department perspectives. The first case discussed was that of Mr. Egan, secretary to the South Cork bodies. His previous remuneration included: £203 salary as assistant clerk of Cork Union, £106 cost of living bonus; £210 salary as assistant clerk of Cork Rural District, £95 cost of living bonus; and £300 in fees as Superintendent Registrar, totalling £916. After subtracting £108 paid to assistants for registration duties, his net pay was £803. The Department proposed a new salary of £750, with no additional provision for assistant remuneration, reducing his net pay to £642—a cut of £161. The Chairman queried the joint conference's recommendation regarding Mr. Egan. The Secretary confirmed they agreed with the Department's £750 salary figure. Mr. R. Daly asked what pension Mr. Egan would receive if he retired, and the Chairman said it would be approximately £710 annually. Mr. Egan expressed dissatisfaction, stating the £750 salary did not account for assistant wages and thus fell short. He insisted the cut was illegal for a transferred officer and could not accept it.

Mr. Daly, T.D., asked whether the registration work fell under the board's remit. The Law Agent stated the Minister's report confirmed it did, though Mr. Egan argued his appointment predated his transfer and the board had no control over it. Mr. Daly suggested that if the Department required Mr. Egan to surrender his fees, it should then cover the assistant costs. The Chairman proposed that registration expenses be borne by the local authority. Capt. Collins moved, and Mr. Hinchin seconded, a motion stating the

Minister's proposed reduction of Mr. Egan's pay violated Section 4(2) of the 1923 Transfer of Officers Order and recommending a salary of £750 inclusive of registrar fees. Mr. R. Daly offered an amendment to adopt the inspector's full report but agreed to retain the three temporary South Cork clerks—Messrs. Conroy, Healy, and Herlihy—until estimates for the upcoming year were prepared. The Board voted 5 to 3 in favour of dealing with each officer individually. Those in favour were Messrs. McCarthy, O'Donovan, Hinchin, Daly, T.D., and Capt. Collins. Against were Messrs. Walsh, R. Daly, and the Chairman. Capt. Collins's motion in support of Mr. Egan's inclusive salary was defeated 5–3, and the report regarding Mr. Egan was approved. Mr. Egan declared he would stand on his legal rights. The Chairman then moved that registration expenses in the South Cork area be charged to the local authority, a motion seconded by Mr. Walsh and agreed to. Mr. Egan remarked that he had the most responsibility but the lowest salary.

Next was Mr. John Hegarty's case from the South Cork area, who had accumulated 29 years of service. His combined remuneration was £498. The Department proposed £150, which the Chairman objected to. Capt. Collins felt £350 was too low. Mr. Egan noted Mr. Hegarty managed up to £20,000 annually, a significant responsibility. Although Capt. Collins proposed a £500 salary, no one seconded. Ultimately, they adopted the local bodies' recommendation of £360 per year. Mr. Egan said Mr. Hegarty would also assert his legal rights. For Mr. Richard Sheehan of South Cork (27 years' service), prevailing pay was £246. The Department suggested £200. The board adopted the conference recommendation of £250 annually. In Bartholomew Curtin's case (nine years' service), his salary totalled £217. The Department proposed £200. The board agreed on £200, with £10 annual increments up to £250. Mr. Richard Flavin of South Cork had 19 years' service. His combined salary was £400. The Department proposed £300. He wrote to the board explaining the added burden of travelling 60 miles daily and longer work hours due to changed job circumstances. He requested a fair salary reflecting these demands. The Chairman suggested re-submitting the conference's proposed salary of £319 3s 4d,

with £10 annual increments up to £350, and including travel expenses. This was agreed upon. Finally, Mr. Edward Murphy, with 17 years' service (plus 7 unpaid years), reported a prevailing salary of £356. The Department suggested £300. Mr. Murphy also wrote expressing dissatisfaction, noting he had to relocate from Kinsale to Cork, incurring higher costs. He asked the board to reconsider his salary to reflect this.[79]

In November 1927, at a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health held at the Courthouse, Mr. T. Corcoran (chairman) presided. In connection with an application from the Very Rev. Canon Barrett, P.P., Blarney, for a supply of water to the Blarney sports field—such supply being only required on certain occasions—the Engineer suggested that the charge for such a supply should be £1 per annum. Mr. Buckley asked if there was sufficient water available for this supply. The Secretary said the Engineer had already reported on the matter and now put forward the recommendation. It was decided to approve the recommendation.

It was agreed that all contractors for repairs to cottages should have such work completed by the next meeting. Arising from a majority decision of the County Board nullifying the appointment by the Committee, also by a majority, of Wm. Murphy, Macroom, as clerk of works over labourers' cottages in No. 3 District—and appointing, again by a majority, after the matter was stated, that Murphy was not fit for the position—John Roche, Mr. Brasier said, as the cottages urgently needed attention, Mr. Roche should be immediately put to work. Mr. Bradley asked if the appointment was subject to the sanction of the Department. He said they could put Mr. Roche to work pending sanction. Mr. Buckley said he understood Mr. Murphy was still acting in the position and fulfilling the duties. In reply to Mr. Brasier, the Secretary said the County Council had already terminated the appointment of all clerks of works, and the Committee afterwards made appointments. Mr. Buckley said he understood all matters in connection with the cottages

[79] *Cork Examiner 11/10/1927*

were left to the Committee, and that it was the Committee who had the power of dealing with all such matters. Under those circumstances, how could the County Board upset their decision? Mr. Brasier said they had the power to make appointments. Mr. Buckley denied that was so. Powers relating to cottages were delegated to the Committee. Mr. Brasier said they could only make recommendations.

After the powers of the Committee had been defined by the Secretary, it was decided that Mr. Roche should proceed with the work of the position to which he was appointed by the County Board. Mr. John Howe, rent collector, Bandon, reported, in connection with the tenancy of a cottage at Shantry, Bandon, that the former tenant, Mrs. Duggan, put the present tenant, Hennessy, and his family into the cottage last October, twelve months ago, and went away to America with her family. Hennessy paid three quarterly rents, and he gave receipts in Mrs. Duggan's name, but when she was not returning, he notified the Board, and the cottage was advertised for possession. Hennessy was the only applicant and was unanimously appointed; he had signed his agreement and paid the fourth quarter's rent. He was legally appointed tenant. It appeared Mrs. Duggan sold the furniture and out-offices to that tenant before she went to America. Hennessy was a first-class tenant.

Mr. J. J. Horgan, solicitor, who appeared for Hennessy, said the facts were as stated and that he was the legal tenant for that cottage. Mrs. Duggan said she had been in the cottage 21 years, and the Hennessys were put in as friends to mind the cottage until she had returned from America. Mr. Horgan remarked, "You cannot have your cake and eat it." Mrs. Hennessy paid £8 for the furniture. Mrs. Duggan denied that this was so. After some discussion, it was decided to ratify the previous decision appointing Hennessy tenant of the cottages.[80]

As reported in an edition of the '*Limerick Leader*,' at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, chaired by Captain Collins, correspondence from the Ministry of Local

[80] *Evening Echo 16/11/1927*

Government and Public Health was read regarding the Charleville Housing Scheme. The County Board received a copy of a letter sent to the Northern Committee, which included a report by Mr. Hickie, the Housing Inspector, following his recent inspection of several proposed sites for labourers' cottages under the Labourers' Acts. Mr. Hickie's report explained that during his visit to Charleville on the 7th, accompanied by engineers Mr. Bolster and Mr. Coughlan, and joined by the County Board Chairman, they inspected multiple plots intended for the new cottages. The first site, located in Bathgoggan Middle, was found to be long and narrow, covering 1 rood 28 perches, and not suitable for the originally planned 18 cottages. Mr. Hickie suggested that no more than eight cottages should be built there, as the terrain would require costly additional groundwork. He recommended focusing on other, more suitable plots for the time being.

The second site, also in Bathgoggan Middle, had only one cottage allocated, but due to its proximity to the town, it could comfortably accommodate three cottages. Other sites in Bathgoggan South were also examined. One corner site of 2 roods 18 perches had ten cottages assigned but could be reduced to eight. Another plot of 3 roods 16 perches was deemed appropriate for four cottages rather than the five planned, while a longer, shallower site of 2 roods 31 perches had been allocated eighteen cottages, which was considered too many; around twelve would be more suitable. He advised using a particular cottage design (the C.L. 20 type) to allow for adequate backyard space necessary for installing pail closets.

Altogether, these adjustments could have resulted in around 27 cottages on the more suitable plots, and if the first plot was used as well, a total of 35 cottages could be built, providing a significant contribution to local housing needs. Mr. Hickie also mentioned some additional plots outside the town that could be used for single cottages. The Secretary of the Northern Committee reported that Mr. Bolster had been instructed to prepare the revised plans reflecting these recommendations, which would then be considered by the committee the following day. As such, the County Board was

advised to await the Northern Committee's recommendations to them, before taking any further action.

Mr. B. Daly noted that the outcome would be a revised housing scheme, with fewer cottages than originally planned. An order was therefore made to postpone any decisions, until the Northern Committee's recommendations were received.[81]

In the New Year of 1928, at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health chaired by Mr. W. J. Broderick and held at the Courthouse in Cork city centre, various health and infrastructure issues were discussed. Mr. Richard Daly proposed a motion to halt consideration of any new water supply or infrastructure schemes unless deemed absolutely urgent and necessary. He highlighted that many such proposals were emerging during a time of serious financial difficulty, suggesting that previous administrations had failed to address these needs when it was more feasible to do so. The motion excluded works already passed by the Southern Committee. While some members expressed concern about potentially excluding urgent projects, the chairman confirmed that the resolution made provisions for essential works. The motion was ultimately agreed upon.

Discussion arose regarding the Knocknagore area, where 17 cottages lacked convenient access to water, requiring residents to carry it nearly half a mile. A pump was suggested as a potential solution. It was noted that nearby Crookhaven had a supply, though it didn't extend beyond the village. The surrounding areas of Crosshaven were also mentioned as needing improved supply due to recent housing developments. Dr. Saunders, the County Medical Officer, and Mr. O'Flynn, the engineer, were tasked with investigating the matter further. The topic of summer homes drawing water from higher streams raised concerns about the impact on local supply. The secretary was teased about possibly advocating for water schemes in places like Courtmacsherry where he might holiday. This light hearted exchange concluded with an agreement to refer the situation to the engineer and medical officer for a formal report. A

[81] *Limerick Leader 16/11/1927*

unanimous resolution was passed to apply for a £100 grant to improve the old road from Leary's Cross to Gneeves Bog. This project was justified by significant local unemployment and the need for better access to a turf bog that serves as an essential fuel source for the community.

Mr. Brooke Brasier brought forward a proposal for a water supply scheme in Ballinacurra. The estimated total cost was £4,000, with a request for a £2,000 government loan. The remaining funds were to be split between Midleton's rural and urban districts. The Board was asked to approve £666 13s. 4d of this cost. Concerns were raised about water shortages and the pressure on the Midleton supply, as well as public reluctance to pay water rents without reliable service. An inspection was planned to identify leaks, and it was agreed that the Minister for Local Government would be informed of the scheme's details. Regarding matters pertaining to the West Cork Committee area, the County Board approved increases in salaries for sanitary officers Meynihan and Driscoll in the Schull district and accepted tenders for cottage repairs in Dunmanway, Schull, and Skibbereen.

The Chairman proposed that any further capital works involving Board of Health expenditure be suspended. Mr. R. Daly argued strongly that the Board, nearing the end of its term, should not burden successors with new financial obligations. He detailed past spending across the region and criticised the imbalance in resource allocation between eastern and western parts of the Co. Cork rural district. The discussion concluded that existing approved schemes would not be affected by the new resolution, though works not yet sanctioned by the Department might be at risk. Mr. D. Hinchin raised concern that important schemes in North Cork, such as those in Millstreet, Newmarket, and Liscarroll, could be disrupted. It was eventually clarified that works already submitted and considered would still be processed on their merits, though no new applications would be accepted going forward. Further debate focused on a contentious scheme in Ballinoe, which Mr. R. Daly claimed was unjustified, given its limited benefit and high cost. He reiterated the need for caution in approving new schemes

during such financially constrained times. The resolution was ultimately passed, with some levity among members about shared names and political alignment.[82]

As reported by the '*Southern Star*' in March 1928, during the adjournment of the Dáil during a night debate, Mr. T. J. Murphy, County councillor and Labour TD for West Cork, raised concerns about the Department of Local Government's refusal to sanction the transfer of a medical officer at that time serving under the West Cork County Board of Health. Mr. Murphy argued that local authorities still retained certain rights and deserved a degree of autonomy in their operations, particularly in personnel matters. He emphasised that the Local Authorities (Officers and Employees) Act 1926 was enacted to promote efficiency and reward merit. In this context, he saw no legal or practical reason for the Department's refusal to approve the appointment in question. He criticised what he viewed as an unnecessary and inappropriate restriction of the already limited powers of local authorities and called on the House to affirm their right to promote capable individuals who had demonstrated ability and service. He further warned that if the Department continued to deny sanction, the appointment would be referred to the Local Appointments Commission, a body whose delays had already caused months-long vacancies, to the detriment of both taxpayers and the poor.

Mr. M. Corry, also a County councillor and Fianna Fáil TD from Cork, supported Mr. Murphy's position and described the Department's action as very unfair. Dr. T. Hennessy, representing Cumann na nGaedheal in Dublin South, also endorsed the promotion, stating that one of the best aspects of the 1926 Act was its support for promoting diligent officers. He personally knew the doctor involved and believed the promotion was justified. Dr. Hennessy appealed to the Minister to reconsider and approve the appointment, provided it met the appropriate standards of merit. He also challenged the Department's position by asserting that the doctor, despite being from outside the immediate area, was still eligible for the role. Mr. M. Brennan, Independent TD

[82] *Cork Examiner 10/1/1928*

for Roscommon, lent his support to Mr. Murphy's call, arguing that if local authorities were not allowed to exercise this basic right, a political conflict could ensue. Mr. S. French, another Fianna Fáil TD from Cork City, expressed his belief that the Minister either lacked full information or had misinterpreted the facts. He urged the Minister to approve the appointment as a gesture of appreciation for the doctor's commendable service to the poor in West Cork.

In response, General Richard Mulcahy, the Minister for Local Government, explained the Department's position. When the vacancy arose, no applications were received from within the South Cork area. However, an unsolicited application was submitted by a dispensary doctor from outside the region. The Minister questioned whether it was appropriate for local boards to act on applications that "simply blew in" without formal procedure. He stated that if the local board wished to consider candidates from outside its area, it should have formally advertised the position and provided a fair opportunity for other interested doctors—such as those in Cork or Waterford—to apply. Furthermore, if a candidate from outside the area was to be considered, the proper course would have been to inform the Minister and request that the Local Appointments Commission handle the selection process. According to the Minister, the local board had not fulfilled its statutory obligations and was not acting in the spirit or letter of the law. Dr. Hennessy queried whether the Minister's objection lay in the fact that the local board had failed to give other candidates the opportunity to apply. General Mulcahy confirmed that this was indeed the Department's position: the local authority had not taken the proper steps to ensure fairness and transparency in the appointment process, and thus, he could not support the promotion as it stood.[83]

In April 1928, the '*Southern Star*' documented that the Cork County Board of Health had brought forward a number of cases seeking possession of cottages from tenants who were in arrears with their rent. The legal firm of Messrs. Powell and Sons represented the authorities in these proceedings. In

[83] *Southern Star 17/3/1928*

some instances, it was noted that the defaulting tenants had made partial payments. The presiding Justice, while adjourning the remaining cases for a month, issued a stern warning to the tenants. He made it clear that this would be the final occasion on which their reasons for non-payment would be entertained.[84]

At the end of May, it was briefly reported that at the Southern Committee meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, it was announced that Mr. Egan, Secretary, had been reinstated and exonerated.[85]

At a special meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, held at the Courthouse during June, Mr. W. J. Broderick (Chairman) presided. The principal business was to receive the views of the Cork County Dispensary Medical Officers' Association, following an interview that was to take place between representatives of that organisation and the Local Government Department, regarding the appointment of three assistant medical officers under the new County Health Scheme adopted by the County Council and approved by the Department. The Chairman asked if the representatives from the Dispensary Doctors' Association had sent any notification regarding whether they intended to attend or to put forward an alternative scheme as a result of the interview with the Department prior to the meeting. The Secretary said he had received a telephone message from Dr. J. J. O'Connor, Hon. Secretary of the Association in question, stating that the proposed interview with the Department had not taken place, and could not now occur before next Friday. Under the circumstances, their deputation would not attend the meeting. He expressed the dispensary doctors' thanks for the kindness, courtesy, and excellent hearing afforded to them by the Board at its last meeting, and also conveyed their gratitude for Dr. Saunders's explanations. Dr. O'Connor had afterwards had a pleasant conversation with Dr. Saunders. However, he did not request that anything further be done at this stage. The Chairman said that members had attended the

[84] *Southern Star 21/4/1928*

[85] *Cork Examiner 31/5/1928*

meeting at personal sacrifice and inconvenience to hear the views of the dispensary doctors, but they had not come. Mr. J. Daly said that under all the circumstances there was nothing to be done except to inform the Local Government Department to proceed with their new health scheme for County Cork, and to make provision for the immediate appointment of three assistant doctors to assist the County Medical Officer in effectively carrying out this important scheme. He understood that if they did not adopt the scheme at that meeting, they would lose the Rockefeller grant to be given in connection with it. He thoroughly approved of such a humane and beneficial scheme, especially as the three assistant doctors to be appointed would particularly deal with the interests of the poor. There would be no invasion of the rights of the dispensary doctors. These new officers would, in fact, prove a help to the dispensary doctors in their own and the special work they themselves would have to perform.

It was outlined that these medical doctors would deal with awkward cases arising in unfamiliar places, to which the dispensary doctors might be reluctant to be called—such as the condemning of houses and similar matters. The service of the assistant medical officers would be devoted to preventing disease in its early stages, and ensuring such good health amongst the population that there would no longer be any need for sanatoria or such treatment in the future. J. Daly believed that the scheme was especially arranged in the interest and for the benefit of the poor. If one of these doctors found an advanced or other form of consumption, they would immediately notify it. Unlike local doctors in the past, they would not be influenced by families to delay and would not be prevented from fulfilling their duty. These assistant doctors would not be in a position to be influenced in that way. Without reflecting negatively on the dispensary medical officers—who, he believed, always did their duty—he had never heard of them voluntarily performing duties for the poor unless officially called upon. He believed that in a short time, the new scheme would prove a most beneficial measure, and one for which they would all feel grateful. His colleagues and he, as members of the County Board, had a deep interest in the welfare of the poor, and he congratulated the Local Government Department on putting forward such

an excellent scheme. He urged them to go full steam ahead (hear, hear). He moved a motion that the scheme be approved and steps taken to make the necessary appointments under it. Captain Collins seconded the motion, stating that the scheme would do much good in curtailing disease amongst schoolchildren. The sooner it was implemented, the better for public health.

Mr. R. Daly said he had some misgivings about the scheme and its long-term financial implications. At the moment, he felt it could become a serious burden on the ratepayers in the future. He wanted more details about the financial aspects—particularly the annual costs once the Rockefeller grant ended. The Secretary said that for the first five years there would be a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation: £1,000 the prevailing year, and £2,000 next year. Mr. R. Daly asked whether the money was a free grant. Dr. Saunders confirmed that it was.

Mr. Daly further asked whether a tax would have to be levied on the county to support the scheme. The Secretary said that a levy had already been passed and was in the process of being collected—specifically 1d in the £ for tuberculosis and related schemes. This levy had previously supported the sanatorium, and was now to cover treatment for tuberculosis and related public health needs. However, because the County Council had not adopted the Tuberculosis Act, they had not received any equivalent grant in the past. The sanatorium had been maintained entirely at the expense of the county and city ratepayers. Under the new scheme, they would receive at least double what they had previously spent, and at a slightly increased cost. A health laboratory would be established, three doctors appointed, and nurses hired—all to be financed by an additional farthing in the pound on the rates. Mr. R. Daly questioned whether tuberculosis was being successfully treated in the sanatorium. Mr. J. Daly replied that it was not being treated properly across the country. Mr. R. Daly said they were already paying one penny in the pound for that treatment, and questioned whether the additional services were really necessary. He feared the appointments would cast a slur on dispensary doctors, who were already visiting schools and diagnosing children with

defects such as deafness, partial blindness, and dental problems. He believed in the old adage: prevention is better than cure. The Chairman quipped in rely that "and that is exactly what this scheme will do."

Mr. Hinchin said the voice of the people should be considered. Since the scheme would bring much good, it should be encouraged and supported. The Secretary said the Department supported the scheme and would not approve of dispensary doctors being appointed to examine children in schools. Mr. J. Daly opined that “it is a scheme entirely for the benefit of the community, especially the poor.”

Mr. Walsh asked whether there would be any other appointments beyond the doctors. The Secretary replied there would also be nurses in various departments, and all costs would fall within the financial estimates already outlined. Mr. Walsh replied by stating that “but that’s only for five years.” The Secretary confirmed that was the case. Mr. R. Daly asked how the scheme would be maintained afterward.

The Chairman said that so long as Government support continued, 50% of the total expenditure would be recouped. Mr. R. Daly asked whether the Rockefeller Foundation’s support would continue. The Secretary confirmed it would continue for five years. The Chairman reiterated the scheme's necessity, describing it as a step toward protecting the general health of the entire community. It was an important move in local administration and would have beneficial effects throughout the county. The scheme’s success would rely on the cooperation of the dispensary doctors, whose local knowledge was invaluable. Their efforts would be coordinated with the assistant officers to ensure the service and treatment provided were helpful and effective. He strongly supported the co-ordination of all efforts in combating disease. They were already paying one penny in the pound toward the sanatorium, he asserted, but without early disease notification. This scheme would ensure that happened. Mr. J. Daly added that if the County had adopted the Tuberculosis Act 15 years previously, they would have received a yearly grant of approximately £3,000. He recalled

having support from Mr. Galvin, Mr. Exham, and Mr. Horgan at the time, but the Council had refused to adopt it.[86]

In July, a meeting of the separate Co. Cork Board of Public Assistance, which took place at the old Cork Poor Law Union headquarters, addressed related matters in the domain of Public Health. Mr. William J. Broderick, the outgoing Chairman, presided. Other members in attendance included Messrs. Philip Monahan (City Commissioner), Martin J. Corry, T.D., E. Cooney, Timothy Corcoran, C. Buckley, Timothy Quill, E. Lynch, P. O'Donoghue, and J. Buckley. The Chairman opened the discussion by referring to a recent ambulance case involving Dr. O'Sullivan from Enniskeane. On the 6th of the month, the ambulance was requested to transport a child to the County Home. An attendant was dispatched with the vehicle, but upon arrival, the child was found to be deceased. The Chairman noted that the key issue was whether there had been any delay on the part of the Board. Mr. Lynch asked if there was any suggestion of delay, to which the Chairman replied there was none, though he expressed concern over the cumbersome nature of dispatching an ambulance from such a distance. Mr. Cooney inquired about the presence of a hospital in the area, and the Secretary confirmed that the Bandon hospital was still incomplete. Mr. Cooney highlighted the incident as a strong argument in favour of completing the hospital. The Board agreed to write to Dr. O'Sullivan to obtain more detailed information on the case.

Mr. C. Buckley then raised an issue from a recent West Cork Board meeting, regarding a patient who had been admitted to the County Home on a weekday, and died the following day. The patient's relatives were not informed in time. Mr. Monahan explained that a letter had been sent via an attendant to the General Post Office, but it had ended up being posted in a pillar box, causing a delay. The Chairman questioned whether it would be more appropriate to notify families by telegram in such circumstances. Mr. Monahan agreed that the postal system was inefficient, despite being the customary method, and added that no prior complaints

[86] *Cork Examiner 20/6/1928*

had been made. Mr. Cooney shared an incident where two patients had the same name, leading to a delay in identifying the correct person, and the patient was buried without the family's knowledge. Mr. Buckley proposed that telegrams should be sent in future. The Chairman supported this suggestion and emphasised the importance of recording the correct address and sending a wire when necessary. The Secretary confirmed that he had made a note of the new protocol.

Next, a letter was read from Mr. E. Murphy, the Home Assistance Officer (HAO) in Cove (Cobh), responding to a previous discussion regarding the disinfection of the fever-car used to transport patients to Cove Hospital. Mr. Murphy stated that whoever had claimed the car was not disinfected was misinformed. He asserted that the car was disinfected on the doctor's instructions after each infectious case and that it was never used for non-infectious patients. He also noted that the vehicle was over 60 years old and in such poor condition that few car owners were willing to use it. The car's state had been reported 12 years ago, and estimates for a replacement had been sought, but the then Board of Guardians had considered the costs too high. Mr. Murphy now found it increasingly difficult to arrange patient transport, and in the absence of a suitable vehicle, the County Home's ambulance would need to be used. He stressed the need for a good second-hand car for regular patients and a dedicated fever car. The Secretary commented that, legally, the responsibility for fever cases lay with the Urban Council. The matter was postponed to the next meeting so that Mr. Lynch could be present for further discussion. Mr. Corcoran asked for an update on the vacant medical officer posts in the Carrigaline and Innishannon districts. The Secretary confirmed that a candidate had recently been interviewed, but there was no specific update on Innishannon. C. Buckley also drew attention to recent complaints he had received from the Blarney area regarding public health concerns, particularly poor sanitation. He noted that the night soil collection and street flushing were not being adequately carried out. The Secretary responded that Mr. O'Flynn had submitted a specification on the matter, but it appeared that no action had been taken. Buckley warned that residents were afraid of an

outbreak of disease and noted the negative impact the poor sanitary conditions could have on tourism in the area. The matter was to be investigated further.[87]

The Annual General Meeting of the Cork County Board of Health for the year 1928 took place during late July. The agenda included the election of a Chairman and possibly a Vice-Chairman, the appointment of members to the Northern, Southern, and Western area committees, and other regular Board of Health business. Mr. W. J. Broderick, the outgoing Chairman, opened the meeting. Mr. Kelly proposed Mr. Broderick for re-election, stating that he was confident the whole county, regardless of political affiliation, supported the appointment. Mr. Hinchin, who had originally nominated Mr. Broderick three years earlier, seconded the motion, praising Broderick's fairness and impartiality. Several members supported the proposal, highlighting Broderick's success in steering the Board through its formative years. Mr. R. Daly remarked that when Broderick had taken office, the county's eighteen district councils were in disarray, but due to the efforts of the Chairman, Secretary Mr. Callanan, and Mr. Exham, order had been restored. Mr. J. Daly echoed these sentiments, noting that Mr. Broderick had dealt with the full business of the three area committees with fairness and clarity. He described the Chairman's ability to manage the Board during a time when few others would have accepted the responsibility. Following unanimous agreement and no other nominations, Mr. Broderick was declared re-elected. In his response, he expressed gratitude for the members' support and pledged to continue serving to the best of his ability. He praised the harmony of the past three years, highlighting the shared commitment to public welfare, especially regarding health, sanatoria, and labourers' cottages.

Mr. R. Daly proposed, and Mr. Hinchin seconded, that the Board proceed with the election of a Vice-Chairman. Mr. R. Daly nominated Captain Collins, praising his efficiency and decisiveness when chairing meetings. Mr. J. Daly seconded the nomination, and it was passed unanimously. Captain

[87] *Cork Examiner 26/7/1928*

Collins thanked the members and credited the smooth functioning of the Board to the work of the committees and the competence of the staff. The Board then discussed the appointment of the Northern, Western, and Southern area committees. The Secretary explained that the Board had the authority to appoint members but, three years prior, had sought the assistance of the County Council to ensure fair representation across all areas. The Chairman supported this approach, noting the difficulty in selecting members that would satisfy the entire county. It was ultimately decided, on the proposal of Mr. R. Daly and seconded by Mr. Kelly, to once again ask Cork County Council to nominate the committee members.

The County Board agreed to circulate copies of the Local Government Auditor's report covering the preceding three years among members. In regard to the proposed Charleville housing scheme, the Secretary reported that the area of charge would be the rural district of Charleville, and the scheme was estimated to cost £10,000. The land had been acquired before the war, but the project had been delayed. Mr. J. Daly opposed the scheme as a local charge, arguing that it would place an undue financial burden on the Charleville area, equivalent to roughly 1 shilling in the pound (£). The Chairman agreed that such a charge on a small area was unreasonable, calling the proposal "absurd."[88]

At an August 1928 meeting of the Cork County Board of Public Health held in the Cork County Council Chamber, Courthouse, Cork city centre, Mr. W. J. Broderick presided as Chairman. A key topic of discussion was the authority held by local area committees in allocating labourers' cottages. Mr. Hurley, representing Macroom, raised concerns about decisions being made by committee members from other areas, specifically pointing out that the Ballincollig committee had influence over a vacancy in Macroom. Mr. Lynch added that a secondary review body was needed to oversee such decisions, particularly to handle instances where an applicant might be treated unfairly. He suggested that all allocations made by the area committees should be

[88] *Cork Examiner 31/7/1928*

subject to final approval by the central board. The Secretary pointed out that such a ratification process could delay the occupancy of cottages for several months. However, the Chairman argued that it would be preferable to leave a cottage vacant rather than allocate it to an unsuitable tenant. Supporting this, Mr. Hinchin highlighted a recent case in which a cottage was given to a man who had previously sold his farmland, despite the existence of a supposedly more deserving applicant—a labourer with a large family. Mr. Lynch clarified that his proposal was not to remove power from the committees but to create an appeals process. In his view, decisions influenced by local pressures could be unfair, and a higher body could ensure decisions were made objectively. He moved that the central board retain ultimate authority over cottage lettings. Mr. Hurley seconded the proposal. However, Mr. J. Daly proposed an amendment to allow area committees to continue operating with the same powers they had been granted two or three years earlier. He argued that taking away these powers would be disheartening for committee members, who were well acquainted with the needs of local labourers. The Chairman seconded this amendment, emphasising the committees' competence and close understanding of local matters. Still, others supported Mr. Lynch's position. Mr. Walsh alleged that a cottage had been sold for £50 without even being advertised. Mr. R. Daly noted the questionable nature of such a transaction. The Chairman acknowledged that similar issues had occurred in the past, though some had taken place before the prevailing board was established.

Further examples were discussed. Mr. John Daly recalled an incident where someone paid £60 for a cottage key, but the local committee had intervened and reassigned the property to a deserving tenant. Another incident involved a man offering a woman £20 for her "goodwill" towards a cottage. Intervention by a committee member resulted in the money being returned, and a rule was set that anyone caught offering bribes would be automatically disqualified from consideration. Despite this, Mr. R. Daly argued that corruption and under-the-table dealings had long been part of the cottage allocation process and were likely to continue. Mr. Lynch disagreed, stating that such practices should be

eliminated. Mr. Hurley added that there were as many as 15 to 18 people in his area actively trying to purchase cottages, a situation that raised serious concerns. Mr. Hinchin observed that, too often, allocations went to those with the most local connections rather than to those most in need. He said there were cases in Kanturk where undesirable tenants had been chosen. Mr. Lynch concluded that the presence of a ratifying body would address these problems and ensure transparency. Mr. J. Daly countered that it would be unfair to undermine the authority of the committees after trusting them with such powers in the past. Mr. R. Daly responded that the newly appointed committees marked a fresh start and required appropriate oversight. Mr. Lynch reiterated that his proposal would not strip the committees of power but would provide a mechanism to resolve disputes fairly.

A vote was taken on Mr. J. Daly's amendment to maintain the committees' existing powers. Members of the Southern and West Cork committees, Mr. R. Daly and Mr. P. O'Donovan, abstained from voting due to their involvement. Mr. Lynch questioned this, expressing frustration that committee members would attend the meeting but decline to participate in key decisions. Ultimately, the amendment was defeated by four votes to three, and Mr. Lynch's original motion, giving the central board final ratifying authority, was passed by the same margin. The meeting also addressed concerns about rent arrears for labourers' cottages. An audit of the board's accounts for the periods ending March 1926, September 1926, and March 1927 revealed considerable arrears across all three committee areas.

In the Southern Area, which oversaw 3,002 cottages, total arrears as of 31 March 1927 stood at £2,981 1s 2d. The Middleton No. 2 rent collection district was particularly problematic, with 200 cottages accounting for £823 3s 11d in arrears—an average of £3 1s 11d per cottage. The Northern Committee area, with 2,564 cottages, fared better, recording arrears of £719 6s 6d at the same date, averaging just over 5 shillings per cottage. A significant improvement in rent collection had been observed in this region. In contrast, the Western Area, managed by the West Cork Board, faced the highest arrears. Of its 1,274 cottages, unpaid rents totalled

£3,335 8s 11d. The Dunmanway district alone accounted for £2,690 14s 11d, with an average of £7 13s 8d owed per cottage—despite the average annual rent being just £2 4s 6d. The auditor criticised the Western Committee's handling of rent collection, suggesting that collectors were not taking the task seriously due to a lack of oversight from the Committee. He stressed that the Committee needed to treat this issue with greater urgency and ensure that all rent collectors understood the importance of recovering arrears. As it stood, very little time had been dedicated to addressing this growing problem.[89]

A special meeting of the Northern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health took place during September 1928 at the County Home in Mallow, chaired by Mr J. M. O'Connor. The main item of business was the consideration of a resolution passed at a recent meeting of the full Cork County Board of Health. The resolution, originally proposed by Chairman Mr W. J. Broderick and seconded by Mr R. Daly (with Mr D. Hinchin dissenting), expressed concern over the deteriorating condition of labourers' cottages in the Kanturk, Millstreet, Mallow, and Charleville areas. The resolution criticised engineers and clerks of works, Mr Buckley and Mr Linehan, for failing to cooperate with the Board in addressing these issues. Despite funding of £4,000 being made available for repairs, the resolution stated that no meaningful action had been taken throughout the summer. As a result, both Mr Buckley and Mr Linehan were suspended without pay, and Mr Coughlan, the Board's engineer, was instructed to take charge of organising tradesmen and labourers to carry out the necessary repairs.

Mr Maurice Murphy noted widespread complaints about the poor condition of cottages across the entire area. He stressed that in his own district, many dwellings were in such disrepair that urgent attention was required before the arrival of winter. Mr Coughlan reported that he was at that time assembling a team to begin repair work across the affected districts and had already hired several workers. However, he cautioned that fully mobilising the team would take some

[89] *Southern Star 18/8/1928*

time. Mr Murphy raised concerns that the original funding allocated to Mr Coughlan's department was insufficient to meet the needs of the entire region. The Secretary confirmed that the allowance for repairs had recently been cut by ten shillings per cottage. Mr Murphy pressed for additional funding to prevent further deterioration, highlighting the urgency of the situation. The Chairman responded that no extra funds could be drawn from the prevailing year's estimates and that the Board would have to wait until the next financial year’s rate-setting. Mr Murphy asked whether it was possible to exceed the prevailing estimate in urgent cases. The Secretary replied that this could only be done if the bank agreed to provide an overdraft.

Mr J. Barry pointed out that between £2,000 and £3,000 earmarked for repairs was reportedly sitting unused. He argued that this money should be spent first before any request for additional funding was made. Mr J. Daly supported this approach, suggesting that once repairs had been addressed in the four named districts, further applications could be made to extend repairs to other areas. Mr Barry added that cottages in his district were in such a poor state that some might collapse before Christmas. To address the most urgent cases, the Chairman proposed that Mr Coughlan identify the worst-affected cottages in each area and take immediate steps to make them weatherproof until broader repairs could be undertaken. This proposal was approved.

The committee then turned to a tenancy dispute regarding a labourer's cottage at Ballymacmorrogh, Castlemagner. Mr M. Murphy moved, and Mr J. Barry seconded, that all prior decisions and orders regarding this cottage be annulled and that Mary Lehane be appointed as the tenant. However, Mr N. J. Barry, supported by Mr Barrett, proposed instead that the cottage be allocated to Jeremiah Lehane, a married man with five children who worked for local farmers. He had originally been granted tenancy and was reportedly willing to provide a room for his sister Mary, a seamstress. Mr T. Golden, solicitor for Jeremiah Lehane, argued that his client had already been appointed tenant, had paid rent, and was officially rated as the occupier. Mr Hinchin objected, stating

that since Jeremiah was at that time in occupation, no alternative appointment could be made until legal possession was regained. Mr J. S. Guiney, solicitor for Mary Lehane, countered that she had cared for her ill father and maintained the household, making her the more deserving candidate. The Chairman noted that granting the tenancy to Jeremiah before formal possession had been secured was an illegal act. Legal proceedings to recover possession had since been initiated. Mr Hinchin pointed out that, by this logic, many prior tenancy appointments made without prior possession were also illegal. It was agreed to postpone any further decision until the legal process was concluded. The committee then addressed a number of motions concerning water supply in rural areas. On Mr Daly's motion, it was agreed to refer to the engineer a proposal to sink a well and install a pump at String Cross, Glanworth, to serve approximately thirty farmers and ten labourers, with costs assigned to the Kilworth dispensary district. Reports were also requested for similar projects at Armagh, Churchtown, Braigue, Shauballymore, and Killcrea Cross. Mr Hinchin successfully proposed that steps be taken to initiate a gravity-fed water supply system for Dromchane Village.

Mr Barry and Mr Hinchin reported a severe shortage of water in Newmarket, where some residents were being forced to purchase water instead. Mr Hinchin suggested the town's existing pumps be repaired as an interim measure. It was decided that the pump on Main Street would be fixed and a temporary water supply secured while the county medical officer prepared a report on the feasibility of a permanent water scheme for the town. The committee also agreed, following Mr Hinchin's suggestion, that the County Council should be encouraged to apply for a loan that had already been sanctioned for a water scheme to serve the Liscarroll and Skehenagh districts. Mr Barrett, seconded by Mr Buckley, proposed that the engineer engage the services of a water purifier to assist with locating a suitable site for an artisan well near Clenor National School. This was approved. Lastly, Mr M. Murphy moved that the engineer examine and report on the condition of the sewerage and water supply systems in Kiskeam, Kingwilliamstown, and Boherbue. The

motion aimed to prompt early intervention to improve sanitation in those villages.[90]

As documented in the '*Kerry News*,' during November 1928, a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the Washington St. Courthouse in Cork city centre, with Mr T. Corcoran presiding as Chairman. He reported on his attendance at a recent meeting of the General Council of County Councils in Dublin, where the potential sale of labourers' cottages to their tenants was discussed. At that meeting, it was noted that only four county committees, including Co. Kerry, had submitted a scheme for this purpose. Given that County Cork was served by three separate health committees, Mr Corcoran suggested that a joint meeting of all three be arranged to collectively consider the issue, and formulate a unified proposal for the county.

Mr Donovan raised a key question regarding the source of purchase money. The Chairman responded that he did not believe the scheme would require significant upfront funding and anticipated it would follow a model similar to land purchase schemes. However, Mr Donovan also queried what security would be available to support the scheme. Mr Corcoran acknowledged that their committee faced unique challenges. Unlike some rural committees, theirs covered a large suburban area where many cottages were occupied by individuals who were not labourers and therefore not legally entitled to benefit from the provisions of the Labourers Act. While the committee was not inclined to evict these residents, they equally could not offer them ownership at the discounted rates intended for labourers. He also highlighted the risk that, even if cottages were sold to legitimate labourers, they might later be resold to individuals who did not qualify under the original scheme, thereby undermining the purpose of the initiative.

Mr Corry inquired about the prevailing financial loss on the cottages. The Secretary, Mr D. Egan, estimated that the average shortfall was around 8 shillings in the pound. Mr Corry noted that, if the sale of cottages could reduce this loss

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[90] *Cork Examiner 20/9/1928*

to ratepayers while still ensuring cottages remained in the hands of labourers, it would be a positive outcome. The Chairman cautioned that, initially, a sale scheme would result in some loss to ratepayers. This was because the income generated from cottage rents did not cover maintenance costs, and the loan repayments for their construction were still being funded through local rates. It was agreed that the existing schemes prepared in the counties of Kerry and Kildare should be circulated among the members of the County Board and its three district committees. Furthermore, arrangements would be made to convene a joint conference of these bodies to further discuss the development of a suitable scheme for Cork County.[91]

In December 1928, another meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health took place. Mr. T. Corcoran again presided as chairman. Reports submitted by Mr. O'Flynn were reviewed and approved. These included sewer extension works at Shannon Street, Bandon, requiring £8 to remedy defects, and repairs to the Kilbrittain Water Works, approved at a cost of £12 6s. 0d. Mr. Corry raised a motion that the salaries of all dairy inspectors be considered with a view to potential pensions. In response, the Secretary presented a list of prevailing salaries across the rural districts: Bandon – J. Reen, £25; Cork – Geo. Richardson, £232; Kinsale – John Prior, £55; Youghal – Philip Magnor, £15 7s. 6d. Additional figures provided by Mr. Corry included Macroom – Mr. O'Leary, £70; Midleton – Dr. Healy, £30; and Cork (further) – Mr. M. O'Keeffe, V.S., £100, bringing Cork's total to £332. Mr. Corry stated it was unfair that people in areas like Midleton and Youghal were contributing to the costs of Cork's inspector. He called for a readjustment of how these salaries were distributed. Mr. Carey questioned whether the objection was limited to Cork, to which Mr. Corry confirmed that it was. The Chairman responded by highlighting the large scale of the Cork area and the public scrutiny surrounding the city's milk supply. He emphasised that the milk was delivered in clean, good condition and that maintaining such high standards necessitated funding. He pointed out that some of Cork's

[91] *Kerry News 19/11/1928*

milk now came from outside the traditional rural district, but the dairies within Cork remained well regulated. He defended the inspectors' work, noting that they often carried out early-morning, unannounced visits, inspecting milking procedures and cleanliness of equipment. Mr. Mullins inquired about the specific duties and rules governing dairy inspectors. The Chairman replied that rules were in place and that their work was extensive and not strictly limited.

The Secretary provided valuation figures for the different areas: Bandon – £74,300; Cork – £182,100; Kinsale – £56,500; Macroom – £61,800; Midleton – £90,100; and Youghal – £25,900. Mr. Ahern commented that Dr. Healy's salary, based on this comparison, should be closer to £200 rather than the prevailing £30. Both Mr. Ahern and Mr. Corry reiterated that Cork should cover its own inspection costs and that prevailing legislation allowing shared charges should be repealed. The Chairman added that a more serious concern was that rural districts were also paying for home assistance for Cork city, a far greater financial burden than that of the dairy inspection costs. Mr. Corry mentioned that the issue had been raised in the Dáil and that the Minister had assured them that, if formal representations were made by the South Cork Board of Assistance, the matter would be addressed. He did not question Mr. Richardson's merit but insisted it was unfair for Midleton residents to pay for Cork's milk inspections. It was agreed to postpone further discussion on the matter while the Secretary compiles a list of cowsheds in each district for comparison.

The Secretary also presented a report from Mr. J. O'Keeffe, Veterinary Inspector, regarding inspections carried out on 28th to 30th November. During this period, Mr. O'Keeffe condemned one whole carcass of cow beef and ten quarters as affected by tuberculosis. Additionally, on 30th November, two more forequarters were condemned. Most of this beef belonged to Mr. Stephen Coughlan of Barrack Street. Mr. O'Keeffe was also asked by Mr. Woods of Carrigrohane to inspect 14 cow carcasses, of which he found one unfit for consumption. He noted that much of this beef was intended for export to Glasgow and was being condemned upon arrival there. In response to a query from the Chairman, Mr.

O'Keeffe confirmed that the County Medical Officer, Dr. Saunders, had authorised these condemnations. The Committee approved the report.

A list of graveyard caretakers and their salaries was submitted. After discussion, the Committee decided to postpone any decisions until the Secretary and the Engineer had drawn up specific regulations for each burial ground. The Committee resolved to take no action regarding the prosecution of vaccination defaulters. Finally, a tender from Mr. Patrick Spillane, Castle Street, Cork, for the sinking of a well at Castlepark was accepted. The cost was quoted per foot. In response to a question from Mr. Mullins, the Secretary estimated that sinking a 30-foot well would cost approximately £160.[92]

In December 1928, a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held in the County Council Chamber in Cork, presided over by Mr. Robert Kelly. The board reviewed a report by a Department inspector on dire housing conditions in Moyross, Union Hall. The inspector described the dwellings as unfit for habitation and emphasised that these were precisely the types of cases the Labourers Acts were designed to address. He urged the Board to take immediate action to provide appropriate housing. John Daly proposed a rent of two shillings per week for new homes, while M. Hurley felt that even one shilling and sixpence would suffice. The chairman agreed with the inspector's assessment, stating that the houses were in deplorable condition and personally attesting to their unsuitability. Daly reiterated the board's willingness to act quickly. The Secretary noted a potential housing scheme that could include Moyross, funded under a new Act allocating £200,000 for schemes involving Public Utility Societies and housing under the Labourers Acts. While the Charleville housing scheme might benefit from an £80 grant per house, he cautioned that this might not apply to Moyross due to a lack of formal plans. John Barry inquired whether the scheme would be guaranteed by county-wide rates. The Secretary replied that if it fell under the 1927 Act rather than the Labourers Act, then the charge would indeed

[92] *Southern Star 8/12/1928*

apply to all of County Cork. Barry observed that the cost to ratepayers would be negligible. Following a motion submitted by Mr. Daly, seconded by Donovan, the board resolved to direct their engineer, Mr. Crowley, to prepare a housing scheme with plans and specifications, and to determine the level of government support available.

Architect J.J. Crowley also reported on poor housing conditions on Sherkin Island, where approximately 14 residents were living in dilapidated, thatched cabins. Only three qualified under the Labourers Act due to land ownership criteria. The limited availability of arable land posed challenges for allocating suitable sites, though one rood per applicant might suffice. For those ineligible under the Labourers Act, Crowley recommended a funding model used successfully on Hare Island. This included a £60 grant from the Housing Department, matched by the Land Commission and potentially the County Council, along with voluntary labour contributions. The chairman urged that island housing be treated with greater flexibility than general housing schemes, supporting more generous grants. The board instructed the architect to prepare a formal proposal. Hurley brought up the case of six unfinished cottages in the Bandon district, abandoned by the Local Government Board in 1910. He suggested applying for a Departmental grant to finish them, estimating costs at around £200. Hinchin added that a similar situation existed in Rockchapel. Daly pledged to approach the Department for loans to complete the cottages in both areas.

Mr. Exham, the board's legal adviser, presented the Blind Persons Act of 1920, which the County Council had not formally adopted. However, the Secretary noted that Cork's health authority had indirectly embraced the Act's provisions. With a motion from Mr. Lynch, seconded by Daly, the Board agreed on the need for a scheme and resolved to convene a special meeting to develop one for submission to the Minister for Local Government and Public Health.

The Board discussed a recommendation from the South Cork Board of Health to hold a joint meeting of the North, South, and West Cork health boards to consider a labourers' cottage

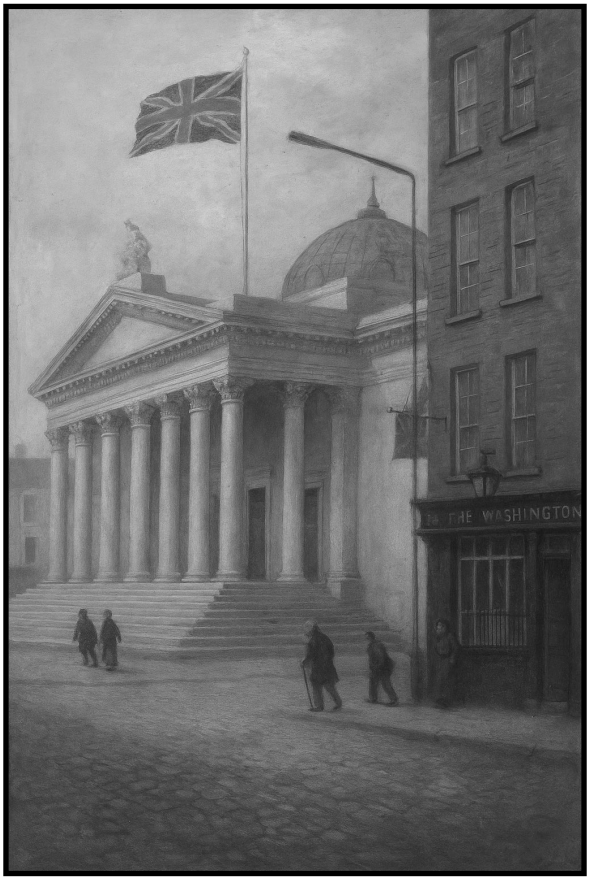
purchase scheme. John Daly opposed the idea strongly, calling it dishonest and warning that selling the houses would lead to them falling out of labourer occupancy within 15 years. He stressed Cork's leadership in maintaining housing for workers, and rejected following other counties' approaches. The Secretary warned that selling the houses would remove the Board's control over them. Daly added that selling would lead to cottages ending up in the hands of non-labourers, with subletting becoming common. He maintained that houses must remain for 'bona fide' labourers. Although P. Daly felt that holding a meeting wouldn't commit the Board to a decision, John Daly countered that the recommendation was binding. Chairman Kelly agreed that selling the cottages would be a mistake, reiterating that Cork should set an example by maintaining and expanding housing for workers. An amendment by R. Daly and T. Walsh to accept the Southern Committee's recommendation was rejected. The Board instead referred the matter back to the committee, stating that the proposal conflicted with the spirit of the Labourers Acts.

The Board also considered a motion from the North Cork Board of Health to approve Mrs. Deborah O'Brien's request to transfer her late husband's remains from Ballysally Cemetery to Listowel, where she now resided. Legal representatives for both Mrs. O'Brien and her brother-in-law Michael O'Brien were present. However, Mr. Hurley and others suggested postponing the decision until Chairman Broderick was present. John Barry argued that deferring the decision by six months would not harm either side and noted that hundreds, including clergy, opposed the move. John Daly described it as a sensitive matter, observing that Mrs. O'Brien had been a devoted wife and deserved consideration, though ideally, the family should resolve the issue privately. The Board ultimately agreed to a three-month adjournment. At Daly's suggestion, the widow and her brother-in-law publicly reconciled, shaking hands before withdrawing.

John Daly inquired about progress on a sewerage scheme for Castlemartyr, prompted by requests from Canon Flannery and local residents. Engineer O'Flynn explained that some residents had illegally connected their homes to a nearby

stream, prompting the Board to intervene and have these connections removed. The issue had been reviewed several times previously, and other members confirmed it was no longer active. The final matter involved a £17 bill for removing the carcass of a cow from a well on Thomas Donovan's property in Lyredane, Grenagh, Co. Cork. The cow in question had been seized by a bankruptcy court messenger, and subsequently fell into the well, where it remained alive for several days. R. Daly objected to the County Board covering the cost, and J. Daly called the amount excessive, suggesting that the Bankruptcy Court should be responsible instead. Mr. R. Daly added that local families were drawing water from the contaminated well, calling the situation disgraceful. The County Board resolved to forward the bill to the Bankruptcy Court for payment.[93]

[93] *Cork Examiner 11/12/1928*



From 1899, and through much of the 20th century, Washington St. Courthouse, Cork City centre, served as the meeting point of Cork County Council, and later, the Cork County Boards of Health and Public Assistance.

BETWEEN DISEASE AND DRAINAGE, 1929-1930

In January 1929, the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health had intended to address its annual budget estimate, following a typically scheduled meeting of the Cork County Agricultural Committee. However, that meeting ran from the afternoon until the evening, by which point the committee felt it was, by then, too late in the day to begin discussions on such a significant matter. After a brief exchange among members, it was agreed that the Southern Committee would re-convene at a different time. It was hoped that this would allow enough time to finalise the estimate and submit it to the full County Board of Health. This had marked the second time the Southern Committee had postponed discussion of its estimate.[94]

In mid-February, at a meeting of the Cork County Council discussing public health and works, with Mr. Broderick (Chairman) presiding, Mr. R. Kelly drew attention to the continued flooding of a section of the main road near Clonakilty village. The matter was referred to the County Surveyor, who was tasked with reporting on the best means of remedying the issue. In response to a question from Mr. Roycroft, the Secretary stated that he had no official information regarding the £7,100 sum mentioned in the press as being available for special tourist road improvements. He also had no knowledge of any funds coming to the County Council in respect of steamrolling the road between Bantry and Crookhaven. The County Council then proceeded to consider motions on the agenda, which had been circulated to members in January in accordance with Section 4 of the Local Government Act, 1927. These motions sought approval for raising various local loans.

In the North Cork Area, Mr. John Daly, T.D., had proposed that the Cork County Council approve the Cork County

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[94] *Cork Examiner 14/1/1929*

Board of Public Health's intention to raise loans from the Commissioners of Public Works for the following projects:

- Improvement of Mitchelstown water supply, £901
- Improvement of Castletownroche water supply, £1,343
- Improvement of Kilworth water supply, £860

In the South Cork Health Area, Mr. Cornelius Buckley moved that the Council approve similar loans for sewerage and water projects, including:

- Sewer laying in Ballincollig, £2,000
- Sewer extensions in Ballinlough (£222) and the Lough (£177)
- Sewer works in Menloe, Blackrock, £701
- Extension of the water supply from Douglas to Ballintemple, £180
- Improvement of Glanmire and Midleton-Ballinacurra water supplies, and several other schemes.
- Additional projects such as public sanitary conveniences, pumps, and drainage in areas like Blackrock, Bandon, and Coachford.

In the West Cork Health Area, Mr. T.J. Murphy, T.D., proposed loans for:

- Extension of Bantry sewer, £272
- Improvement of Dunmanway water supply and sewerage, £2,208
- Water supplies in Kilcrohane (£260) and Castletownbere (£350)

Mr. Harrington raised concerns regarding the areas to be charged for these loans. He believed many of these works should be classified as dispensary area charges rather than rural district charges. Mr. Cooney seconded his motion. Mr. John Daly noted that most of the funds were for maintenance work. The Chairman agreed with Mr. Harrington, asserting that expenditure control could best be achieved by narrowing the chargeable areas.

Mr. Meaney countered that each case should be considered individually. In instances where a rural area had been paying for 30 to 40 years, it would not be fair to reassign charges to the dispensary area. Each item on the loan list was then discussed and ultimately approved, with some debate. Mr. Corcoran, referring to water extensions in the city's suburbs, said residents wanted the rate of 2/6 in the £ reduced. He also advised them to submit a text to the City Commissioner, who was responsible for the water rate. The Council, he noted, had no authority over this matter. The Chairman argued that the Corporation, which earned revenue from these water extensions, should contribute to the cost of laying the pipes. Mr. Corcoran proposed asking the City Commissioner to reduce the water rate; Mr. C. Buckley seconded.

It was resolved, after discussion, to adopt a resolution requesting the City Commissioner, Mr. Monahan, to cover half the cost of laying the pipes. A separate debate arose regarding whether the Castlepark pump should be charged to the rural or dispensary district. Mr. Mullins proposed adopting the scheme, while Messrs. Cooney and Harrington opposed, supported by the Chairman. Mr. Corcoran observed that most of the proposed works were already completed and suggested that only future projects be affected by the area charge decision. The Chairman urged the Council to establish a clear policy—whether expenditure should be restricted and, if so, by limiting the area of charge. He pointed out that while a charge of 1/16 of a penny in the £ might seem trivial in a rural area, it would be quite significant if applied to a dispensary area at a rate of 1/- in the £. Mr. Corcoran questioned why these concerns weren't raised earlier at the Board of Health meetings. The Chairman replied that he had reserved the right to deal with them at the Council level. A vote was then held on Mr. Cooney's amendment to designate these as dispensary area charges. Following a vote, the Chairman declared the dispensary area charge adopted. This recommendation would be passed to the Board of Health, with the County Council pledging to approve it as such.[95]

[95] *Cork Examiner 15/2/1929*

At a March 1929 meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, Captain Collins (Vice-Chairman), and subsequently Mr. W. J. Broderick (Chairman), presided. Also present were Messrs. J. Daly, T.D.; M. Hurley, P. O'Donovan, M. Walsh, D. Hinchin, and Richard Daly. It was agreed to affix the seal of the Board to the Deeds of Mortgage, providing security to the Commissioners of Public Works for repayment of the following sums, proposed to be advanced under the Public Health (Ireland) Acts. These loans were intended for works previously approved by the County Council, namely:

- Extension of Kilworth water supply, £860
- Laying of sewer at Ballincollig, £2,009
- Extension of sewer at Ballinlough, £222
- Extension of Lough sewer, £477
- Laying of sewer at Menloe, £704
- Extension of water supply from Douglas to Ballintemple, £180
- Improvement of Bandon water supply, £1,050
- Extension of sewer in the town of Bantry, £272
- Water supply for the village of Kilcrohane, £260
- Improvement of Castletownroche water supply, £1,343
- Improvement of Castletownbere water supply, £350
- Extension of Dunmanway sewerage and waterworks, £2,208

The Local Government Department had forwarded a letter from Dr. H. M. Sweetnam, the former Medical Officer of Health at Innishannon. He disputed the superannuation allowance awarded by the Cork County Board of Health. Dr. Sweetnam claimed that, having resigned with the Department's approval under Section 8 of the 1919 Act, he was entitled to additional years of service, which would allow him to receive the maximum pension, as provided by that section. Mr. Broderick stated that the Board had already dealt with the case and proposed that they adhere to their previous decision. Captain Collins seconded the motion, and it was adopted. In relation to the recent decision to transfer Heatherside Sanatorium from the Joint Hospital Board, to a Joint Committee of both Cork County Council and Cork Corporation, it was decided that Dr. Condy, the County

Medical Officer of Health, should prepare a tuberculosis scheme under the new system of sanatorium administration. The meeting then continued with consideration of the minutes and recommendations of the Northern, Southern, and Western Committees.

An adjourned application was again considered from Mrs. Deborah O'Brien of the Charleville area, widow of the late Mr. Seán O'Brien, who had been killed during the troubled period and buried at Holycross Cemetery. She had requested the exhumation of his remains for reburial in Listowel Cemetery, where she had since taken up residence. When the matter had originally come before the Board, it had been opposed by Mr. Michael O'Brien, the deceased's brother, and was adjourned to allow the interested parties time to reach agreement. Mr. Binchy, solicitor from Charleville, appeared at the meeting on behalf of Mr. Michael O'Brien, who was also present. Mr. Patrick Griffin, brother-in-law of Mrs. Deborah O'Brien, attended as well. Mr. Daly, T.D., proposed that the matter be adjourned for another twelve months, suggesting they might hear no more of it thereafter. Mr. Binchy indicated that both parties were agreeable to a three-year adjournment. Mr. Daly accepted this, and proposed the matter be deferred for that period. Mr. J. Barry, M.C.C., attending in relation to the Charleville housing scheme, congratulated the parties on having reached an amicable arrangement. Mr. Hinchin joined in the congratulations, noting that he had originally proposed a three-month adjournment at a meeting in Cork some time ago in hopes of encouraging a settlement. He believed he had acted in good faith and sought to resolve a regrettable dispute. However, he said that after leaving the Council Chamber, he was cowardly attacked in the street by someone involved in the dispute. He emphasised that he did not believe any member of the O'Brien family was responsible. Mr. Barry remarked, "We can bury the hatchet now." Mr. Hinchin agreed, but added that he wanted the Board's protection against any repeat of such conduct. Mr. Barry said they all regretted the incident, especially as it had happened to a respected councillor such as Mr. Hinchin. Mr. Hinchin reiterated that he had simply been doing his duty, had acted fairly, and had not deserved such treatment.

The Chairman stated that any interference with the liberty of an individual member must be strongly condemned. If the identity of the assailant had been known, they would have been dealt with severely. The behaviour, he said, was entirely uncalled for. Mr. Binchy, representing Mr. O'Brien, said he strongly disapproved of the attack and made clear that neither he nor the O'Brien family knew anything about it. Mr. R. Daly said the Council should enter a strong protest against the assault on Mr. Hinchin, whom he described as a popular and respected member. The matter was then officially adjourned for three years. On the motion of Mr. Hurley, seconded by Mr. Walsh, it was agreed that Kilbrogan Burial Ground be placed under the management of the Board, as it served the district, and that steps be taken to bring the burial ground into proper condition.

A letter was read from the Department of Local Government concerning the Charleville housing scheme. It stated that funds for the construction of cottages could not be advanced by the Board of Public Works and suggested that, as the matter was urgent and long delayed, the necessary money should be sourced elsewhere. The Chairman noted that the funds required would have to be raised through the Board's treasurers. The Secretary said the Board would need to request Cork County Council to provide, by way of loan, the sum of £7,500—the total cost of the scheme.[96]

By early April, Mr. W. J. Broderick, M.C.C. (Chairman), once again presided over a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health. A letter was read from the Minister and the Munster and Leinster Bank addressed to Mr. John Barry in connection with a loan for the Charleville Housing Scheme. The bank expressed its willingness to advance £7,500 under the authority of the Minister for Local Government and Public Health, secured by a mortgage on the rates, to be repaid over 15 years in half-yearly instalments. The Chairman asked Mr. Barry if Charleville was prepared to accept responsibility for the loan within its own local area, to which Mr. Barry responded affirmatively, adding that there

[96] *Southern Star 16/3/1929*

would be income generated from the rents. The loan was secured at the County Council's rate of 4½ per cent interest. The Chairman noted that the charge would need to be made on the Charleville rural area. Mr. Barry stated that the plan involved building 36 houses—six labourers' cottages and 30 town houses. The proposed weekly rent was two shillings and sixpence. The Secretary estimated the income from rent at £227 per year. Mr. Barry commented that the financial burden would lessen over time, with interest decreasing after the first few payments. The Secretary added that £500 in principal would be repaid annually for 15 years, and interest would total about £317 per year. The rent did not include rates. Mr. Barry said that a 6d. rate would generate about £652, and the Chairman noted that this would effectively mean reintroducing the old 7½d. rate. Mr. Barry confirmed this and said the North Cork Board of Health would collect the rents. It was also noted that since the Board of Works had no authority to fund the project, the Department had agreed to private borrowing. The first step was to inform the Minister for Local Government that the Munster and Leinster Bank was willing to provide the loan against the county's rates, to be charged to the Charleville Rural District, and to seek consent to borrow. The Chairman clarified that before approaching the Department, the County Council must endorse the recommendation.

There was debate on whether the loan could be secured solely against the Charleville area's rates or whether it would have to involve the entire county. Mr. Exham raised concerns that the whole county was effectively being asked to act as guarantor. Mr. Kelly believed the Charleville district alone should be sufficient security. The Chairman stated that the Board could recommend the scheme to the County Council, and it would then be up to the Council and the Department to agree on the terms. Mr. R. Daly raised objections to any possibility of a county-at-large charge. The Chairman insisted it was not a general charge, and that Charleville would bear the responsibility. Mr. Barry added that Charleville residents had paid 7d. in the £ for 20 years for previous housing and this was a continuation of that effort. It was ultimately proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mr. J. Daly, and unanimously agreed to recommend the scheme

to the County Council, with liability resting on the Charleville district. Dr. Condor, County Medical Officer of Health, reported on the risk of diphtheria and scarlet fever carriers being discharged too soon from the Cork District Fever Hospital. He noted that some patients discharged with negative swabs later tested positive again, potentially causing new infections. He recommended extending hospital stays for such cases to a minimum of four weeks where possible, especially to limit the spread of virulent germs. Thirty-eight diphtheria carrier examinations were reported. Water sample analyses showed satisfactory results from the Cottage Hospital pump in Dunmanway. However, bacteriological reports on two samples from Newmarket were deemed of little value without a sanitary survey and chemical analysis. The water supply in Newmarket was found to be totally inadequate, with some residents walking nearly a mile to access the only available supply at the Sinnott pump. This issue has persisted for almost two years and requires urgent attention.

On sanitation, Dr. O'Mahony had raised concerns regarding common lodging houses and slaughterhouses in Bantry. While there were no longer any registered common lodging houses, the seven slaughterhouses inspected were found to be in deplorable condition, including poor drainage, improper slaughtering practices near living spaces, and lack of hygiene. Dr. Condy noted that rural authorities have no powers to regulate slaughterhouses unless urban powers are applied for and granted. A veterinary officer is available, and if urban powers were obtained, inspections and enforcement could be better carried out. Fifty-seven milk samples were tested, with many failing the dirt test. Advisory letters were prepared for distribution to improve hygiene in production. School medical inspections were conducted across three areas in February and March. Over 3,100 children were inspected, with 54.6% found to have at least one defect in February, and a similar percentage in March. Only 4.3% of parents attended these examinations, which was considered regrettably low. On tuberculosis, efforts were being made to follow up on all notified cases, assess treatment needs, and provide supplies such as cod liver oil. Clinics were on hold pending approval of a proposed clinic model. The Minister

had agreed in principle, with the condition that suitable premises be secured in areas like Mallow and Bantry. The Board adopted these reports. The Secretary also announced a sealed order for the election of five members to the Port Sanitary Authority Board. Messrs. Lynch, D. Hinchin, R. Kelly, R. Daly, and Capt. Collins were appointed. Mr. J. Daly humorously remarked on the irony of receiving a "sealed order" with no seals. Lastly, the Board discussed salary increases. A recommendation from the Southern Committee to raise Mr. Daniel Fitzgerald's salary (Home Assistance Officer and S.S.O.) from £100 to £110 was debated. The Chairman expressed concern about officials requesting increases shortly after appointment. Nonetheless, the proposal was put forward based on standardisation with other positions, and was considered on its merits.[97]

At another meeting of the full Board during July 1929, early in the meeting, the Chairman raised a query with Mr. O'Flynn, the engineer, regarding whether Clerks of Works employed by the County Board of Health were considered full-time officials. Mr. O'Flynn confirmed that they were. The Chairman pointed out a recent inconsistency, where one Clerk of Works, Mr. Twomey, had submitted a bill for work done outside his official duties for the County Council, which he felt should not occur if the position is indeed full-time. The Secretary, Mr. Eugene Callanan, explained that Mr. Twomey had been requested by the County Council's solicitor to undertake the additional work and that such situations should warrant separate payment. However, the Chairman maintained his view that full-time officers should not receive double payment for work done for both the County Board of Health and the County Council. He stressed that mileage allowances could be granted for such tasks, but not a second salary. He insisted that this policy should be clarified in future contracts. Mr. R. Daly countered, saying that although Clerks of Works were officially full-time, their duties often did not occupy all of their time, and it was reasonable for them to undertake occasional additional tasks. The Chairman was firm in his stance, arguing that public officials should not exploit such opportunities for extra pay

[97] *Cork Examiner 9/4/1929*

and calling it "rotten public spirit"—though he stopped short of calling it chicanery. Ultimately, he insisted that while mileage could be compensated, no further payment should be made.

The Board then considered a letter from the Minister for Local Government concerning a proposal to divide Cork County into three separate Boards of Health. The Minister acknowledged flaws in the existing system but expressed doubt that creating three distinct administrative bodies would enhance public health outcomes. Instead, he suggested that the existing Board hold separate monthly meetings to focus exclusively on health issues, apart from housing or other administrative matters. A decision on this matter was deferred.

In relation to the Charleville housing scheme, the Minister had also responded to the application for a loan from the Munster and Leinster Bank. While the bank had approved the loan in principle, the Minister stated that official sanction could not be granted until tenders had been invited and received for the construction of the houses. The Secretary noted that some people in Mallow believed the Board of Health was responsible for delays in progressing the scheme, though he insisted this was untrue. He pointed out that the Board had managed to advance a housing project that had been attempted unsuccessfully in Mallow for over 25 years. Mr. Bolster, the County Engineer in charge of the scheme, estimated the cost at £7,850. The Secretary clarified that while the loan being sought was £7,630, the total cost was actually £10,430, inclusive of a government grant amounting to £2,800. However, concerns were raised that the grant might be reduced to £50 per house, which could’ve altered the scheme significantly. Mr. Bolster confirmed that the plan involved building 35 houses: eight in the countryside and 27 in Charleville town, all within the rural area jurisdiction. Mr. J. Daly proposed that to avoid further delays, the Board should advertise for tenders directly, rather than through Mallow, which would save about five weeks. He offered to take full responsibility for this approach, and Mr. R. Daly seconded. Mr. Daly also criticised the government for reducing the housing grant, calling it stingy. He asserted that

the Board had done everything possible and defended its efforts before the Minister. The motion to proceed with advertising the tenders was agreed to unanimously.

Towards the end of the meeting, the Chairman raised concerns about rent notices being issued to tenants of labourers' cottages in the Mallow area. He described how some rent collectors had sent out postcards threatening tenants with legal action if they did not deliver rent to a specific location. The Chairman found this practice offensive, inconsiderate, and entirely inappropriate. While he acknowledged that rent collectors had a duty to secure payments, he strongly disapproved of any approach that lacked respect for the dignity and feelings of the tenants. He was satisfied that rent collection duties were not being carried out in a proper or humane manner.[98]

A meeting of the West Cork Board of Public Health was held in the boardroom of the County Home, Clonakilty, later in July. Mr. J. McCarthy presided as Chairman. During the election of officers, Mr. Kelly proposed the re-election of Mr. J. C. McCarthy as Chairman, noting his capable leadership over the past year and expressing the belief that the proposal reflected the unanimous wishes of the Board. Mr. Roycroft seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously. Mr. P. O'Donovan then proposed that Mr. Dan O'Callaghan be appointed Vice-Chairman. Mr. Roycroft seconded this proposal, which was also passed unanimously. The matter of staffing Skibbereen Hospital was deferred until the next meeting, which was to be held in Skibbereen. Mr. Murphy suggested that several Board members meet at the hospital beforehand to consult with the doctor. The Secretary supported this idea, indicating that an increase in staff was likely due to the planned establishment of a permanent fever hospital for treating scarlatina and other diseases. A list of requirements for the new Skibbereen Hospital was submitted by the Matron. A similar list was received from the Matron of the County Home in Clonakilty. The Secretary was instructed to procure the items from the Department's trade list. A discussion ensued about the possibility of placing orders

[98] *Cork Examiner 9/7/1929*

locally, provided the quality and price were equal to those on the Department list. Mr. O'Callaghan stated that it would be fair to support local suppliers, especially given that the money came from the local community. Both the Chairman and Mr. Kelly agreed that local firms should be given preference under those conditions. On the proposal of Mr. White, seconded by Mr. Roycroft, it was decided to seek local quotations for bedsteads.

Mr. T. J. Murphy, T.D., brought forward a motion for a salary increase for Nurse J. J. Crowley of the County Home in Clonakilty. Mr. Murphy described her as a long-serving and efficient officer, noting that she had been in service since the days of the old Clonakilty Rural District Council. Recently, she had been performing both day and night duties for thirteen consecutive weeks, which saved the Board £3 11s per week. Her prevailing salary was £70 per annum. Mr. Murphy proposed a modest increase of £10. While the Chairman acknowledged Nurse Crowley's capabilities, he reminded the Board of their standing rule not to consider salary increases unless they were accounted for in the budget. The Secretary pointed out that Nurse Crowley had previously earned £60 at a time when the patient count was around 40; now, with 90 patients and nine wards, her workload had increased significantly. Mr. Kelly expressed concern about setting a precedent, but the Secretary clarified that this case was exceptional due to the patient numbers. Mr. White, who did not personally know the nurse, nevertheless supported the proposal based on her record. The motion for a £10 increase was seconded by Mr. C. O'Donovan and passed unanimously. Mr. Kelly gave notice of his intention to propose at the next meeting that no further salary increases be considered unless provision for them was made in the annual estimate. Mr. Murphy raised concerns about the practice of leaving home assistance in shops and houses without direct contact between the assistance officers and recipients. He argued against the practice, suggesting that assistance be sent by post in such cases.

The Board then discussed acquiring premises for a dispensary at Union Hall. Mr. O'Callaghan mentioned that a six-room house was available, though the owner wished to

let three of the rooms separately. The house was considered suitable and had previously been occupied by the Civic Guards.

The Minister for Local Government and Public Health had written to the Board expressing dissatisfaction with the collection of labourers' cottage rents in the western area. Only about 30 percent of the arrears outstanding as of 31 March 1927 had been collected over the subsequent two years. The Minister reminded the Board of their earlier resolution requiring monthly visits by collectors to tenants and urged stricter adherence. Arrears had increased by £157 7s 7d in April and May. Dr. O'Driscoll reported on the water supply situation in Courtmacsherry. The primary source was an open quarry well with a capacity of about 800 gallons. Water was collected in buckets dipped directly into the well, which posed sanitation concerns. He then recommended constructing a 10,000-gallon concrete container, and installing a pipe to deliver water to pumps. Mr. Crowley was asked to prepare a report on the proposed scheme.

The Board then considered a motion by Mr. Roycroft regarding the water supply scheme for the village of Ballydehob. A deputation of residents attended the meeting to advocate for the scheme. Mr. O'Mahony read a report by Mr. Crowley, who proposed installing a Blake's Hydraulic Ram to pump water from the Rathruane River, about a quarter of a mile from the village, to a filter and storage tank. The estimated cost of the project was £1,565, intended to serve a population of 360 with a daily supply of 10,800 gallons. Annual upkeep costs were projected at £10 for filter maintenance and £28 for a curator's salary. Thirty-four residents had expressed willingness to pay for the water, at approximate annual rates ranging from £1 to £5. Mr. McConnell, a member of the deputation, spoke of the dire need for clean water. The prevailing pumps, in his view, were inadequate, and one even had allowed worms through the system. He confirmed strong community support for the project, including from farmers. Mr. O'Callaghan questioned whether any farmers were present, to which Rev. McConnell replied that one farmer had attended and that others were supportive. Mr. Young, another deputation member, said

residents were willing to pay for the water supply. Mr. Murphy emphasised the potential public health consequences if action was not taken. It was agreed, on the proposal of Mr. Roycroft and seconded by Mr. Kelly, that the scheme be adopted, pending the submission of a list of potential consumers and the contributions they were willing to make. The area of charge was to be the former Schull Rural District. Finally, Mr. T. J. Murphy, T.D., gave notice of his intention to propose at the next meeting that a scheme be prepared for the erection of additional labourers' cottages in the West Cork Board of Health area.[99]

At the August 1929 full meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, held at the Courthouse, Captain Collins (Vice-chairperson) presided as Chairman. On the motion of Mr. J. Daly, seconded by Mr. Walsh and supported by the Chairman, other members, and the Secretaries of the Board and the Northern, Southern, and Western Committees, a vote of condolence was passed to Mr. Wm. J. Broderick, Chairman of the Board, on the death of his mother. Dr. Condy, County Medical Officer of Health, reported that many cases of diphtheria remained under hospital treatment for extended periods. In specific cases, it was pointed out that performing a tonsillectomy could save both time and money by reducing the risk of patients becoming sources of infection. He recommended that the Board make an agreement with the North and South Fever Hospitals to carry out the procedure for carriers who had proved resistant to other forms of treatment. A reasonable charge for the operation would be £1 1s. During the quarter ending 30th June, a total of 567 notifications were received. These included 111 cases of diphtheria, 89 of scarlet fever, 11 of influenzal pneumonia, five of pneumonia, six of encephalitis lethargica, seven of erysipelas, 151 of tuberculosis, four of enteric fever, two of puerperal sepsis, and one of summer diarrhoea. In 18 cases, medical practitioners failed to notify instances of infectious disease, and were requested to provide explanations. One case of diphtheria in the Kanturk district had not been reported by the parents, who also failed to call in a medical attendant. The case came to the attention of the

[99] *Southern Star 27/7/1929*

Health Department during routine investigations in the area by a sanitary sub-officer. A total of 114 investigation cards were returned by sanitary sub-officers in June and July concerning infectious diseases. The sale of milk from infected premises was prohibited at 16 dairies for the necessary periods. Nine cases of suspected enteric fever were notified, four of which were confirmed by laboratory testing. Twenty-five individuals who had been in contact with infected persons received protective inoculation with typhoid vaccine.

The immunisation scheme was, by this time, in operation across the county health area. It provided for three centres, one in each area, where individuals could receive treatment from Health Department officers on Saturday mornings. The work was also being carried out in schools, beginning with those located in districts with high endemic levels. Practitioners were provided with the necessary materials to administer the treatment, and these were supplied to them at cost by the Board. Necessitous cases received treatment free of charge, while others were asked to contribute a nominal fee of 2s. 6d. for the full course of injections. Up to that point, 680 children and adults had received treatment under the County Health Scheme. In urban areas, the cost of treatment was to be borne by the relevant Urban Councils. Passage West Urban Council had unanimously agreed to adopt the treatment, and a clinic was being held weekly in the area. The Board expressed gratitude to the Chairman and members of this Council for readily supporting the scheme, as well as to the clergy of Passage West and Monkstown, and to local practitioners who had cooperated fully with the Health Department to ensure high attendance. Up to that point, 210 children in the area had received treatment. The CYMS Hall was kindly made available to the Board for this purpose by Rev. Father McCarthy. In the Carrigaline dispensary district, Dr. Kiely had carried out a large number of inoculations and had administered treatment to children at the Carrigaline School premises in co-operation with the Health Department. Children in both the Shanbally and Ringaskiddy areas had also received immunisation from Dr. Kiely, with a total of 300 children treated. Practitioners in other areas were also participating in the county scheme,

though the numbers remained limited. Many children treated were of infant and pre-school age, particularly in Passage West, which was considered a highly satisfactory feature, as earlier treatment post six months of age was preferable. At that point, no other Urban District Councils besides Passage West and Youghal had provided the necessary authorisation for the scheme.

The North Cork Board of Public Health was also informed of the urgent need for a fresh sewage disposal system in Castletownroche, due to poor sanitary conditions. Thirteen premises in the Northern area, 40 in the Southern area, and eight in the Western area were inspected. The condition of properties in Youghal and Macroom urban districts was also reported to the respective Councils as requiring immediate attention. Thirty-two milk samples were also tested for cleanliness in the Cork rural area. Sixty-eight score-cards were returned from dairy inspectors throughout the county, and appropriate recommendations were issued to executive sanitary officers.

A total of 610 births were notified during June and July. Two midwives were inspected in the Northern area, six in the Southern area, and six in the Western area. Fifty notifications of cases requiring medical assistance were received from midwives, along with six notifications of stillbirths, one maternal death, one infant death, two cases of artificial feeding, one source of infection, and one case involving laying out of a deceased body. Miss Mooney, the Superintendent Health Visitor, commenced duties on 1st July, assisting particularly with diphtheria immunisation work. Her travel allowance was brought forward for the Board's decision. Dr. Brigid Lyons Thornton had submitted her resignation as Assistant County Medical Officer of Health. The vacancy was to be reported to the Local Appointments Commission so that a successor could be appointed.[100]

As outlined by the '*Southern Star*,' at the end of the month, the question of providing a proper water supply was discussed at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health's

[100] *Cork Examiner 13/8/1929*

Western Committee. Regarding the existing supply, Mr. J. J. O'Crowley, Engineer, reported that he had taken levels from the quarry well at Courtmacsherry to the public street. He found that the head available over the highest part of the street, namely 11 feet, was quite sufficient to justify laying down pipes to supply three street fountains. The well had never gone dry and was the chief source of supply to the village during dry seasons. A small retaining tank surrounded the well, and he proposed to enlarge this to 3,500 gallons capacity, to be held in reserve for dry periods. The provision of street fountains would be of great benefit to the inhabitants. He estimated the cost at £100. Dr. O'Driscoll expressed the opinion that if they could get a tank with twice the capacity, it would be sufficient.

The Reverend Fr. John Sheehy, C.C., then spoke in support of providing a proper water supply for the village. He emphasised that the Board's primary duty was to look after the poor. The poor of Courtmacsherry, he noted, lived in a place locally known as "Siberia," and had to walk a quarter of a mile to fetch water. St. Theresa's Well, near the railway station, was situated at a sufficient height to enable water to be pumped up to that area. He suggested constructing a tank in the lower part of the village and enlarging the tank at the upper part. He also recommended laying a four-inch pipe to the area known as "Siberia." There was also a source of supply midway between the two, at a place called Wheel Ends. If it was possible to connect all three sources, it would create a perfect scheme. It was unanimously decided that Mr. Crowley, accompanied by a second engineer, would make a further inspection and report to the next meeting.[101]

A full meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held in the County Council Chamber, Washington St. Courthouse, Cork city centre that September, with Mr W. J. Broderick presiding as Chairman. The Board considered reports from their engineers regarding the prevailing sanitary conditions of Crosshaven and Fennel's Bay. The Secretary stated that the cost of three drainage schemes was estimated at £13,960, in addition to £90 per year for upkeep. The Engineer stated

[101] *Southern Star 31/8/1929*

that he saw no reason to change the report he had made in 1928. On the suggestion of Mr R. Daly, further consideration of the matter was adjourned pending receipt of the joint report being prepared by Mr O'Flynn, the Board's Engineer, and Dr Condy, County Medical Officer of Health.

In connection with the immunisation scheme for the prevention of diphtheria and operations on children, Mr John Daly, T.D., referred to a letter addressed to the Fermoy Urban Council by Dr Condy. Mr Daly suggested that all operations for children from the Fermoy area should be performed in Fermoy Hospital, which was one of the best-equipped hospitals in the county. He noted that the North Cork Board of Health had appointed an eye, ear, and throat specialist, but he understood that the reason this had not been sanctioned locally was because Dr Condy's assistants were performing the operations and were overworked. Furthermore, he argued, it would place a heavy financial burden on parents to bring their children to Cork for treatment. He proposed that the operations on children be carried out in Fermoy Hospital, where there was a splendid surgeon and a very capable staff to assist. Mr Hinchin agreed, saying it was a great hardship on the poor to have to travel to Cork and pay their way into the hospitals there. It was also a hardship on the ratepayers, who contributed about £600 or £700 annually to the Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital and a similar amount to the South and North Infirmaries. He added that if specialists visited the outside hospitals once a month, it would provide great savings and relief to the poor. Dr Condy replied that provision had been made for operations for nose and throat diseases in Fermoy, Kanturk, Bandon, Clonakilty, and Skibbereen. However, for the purposes of immunisation, they could not have a centre in every urban district.

Mr Daly responded that he was representing Fermoy, where there was a splendidly equipped hospital. He recalled that fifteen years prior, he had helped to have the hospital put in that condition and believed it should be used to its fullest capacity. Instead of having the children operated on in the dispensaries, they should be brought for surgical treatment to the hospital, where there was a capable staff of nuns and nurses in whom the community had full confidence. Dr

Condy clarified that the treatment was not an operation and did not require a nursing staff. The Chairman noted that patients suffering from diphtheria had to be immunised, and Mr Daly's point was that for those from the Fermoy area, it would save parents the expense of bringing their children to Mallow and Cork City, if the treatment were carried out in Fermoy Hospital.[102]

At a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, held at the Courthouse in early October, Mr T. Corcoran (chairman) presided. Mr J. Buckley appeared before the meeting on behalf of the clergy and people of Glenville and requested that a water supply, via a pump, be provided for them. They had a requisition signed by the inhabitants requesting such a supply. The Chairman remarked, "I thought you had too much water in that part of the country." Mr Buckley clarified that the supply was required for the northern part of the district. The engineer stated that there were already two pumps in the village of Glenville. It was decided that the local dispensary medical officer should report on the necessity for such a supply.

In the course of a report from Dr Lynch, Medical Officer of Health, Dungourney, it was stated that the water was unfit for drinking at Moneygourney, Ballyorban, and Passage Road. The supply was deficient at Donnybrook and Rochestown. The engineer reported that the sewerage was defective at Douglas village and absent at Donnybrook and Chapel Road. Analysis of water at Moneygourney, Ballyorban, and Passage Road had given satisfactory results. There was a second well on Passage Road, which had given unfavourable results, but it was on private property. Donnybrook had no supply of drinking water nearer than 200 yards, at Harding's Well. The committee had repeatedly asked the Corporation to extend that main to the village, but due to a lack of pressure, the construction of a water tower was necessary. The committee did not consider this proposal reasonable, as the whole cost would have to be borne by them while the Corporation would collect the revenue. The main sewer extended to Donnybrook and took drainage from Morrogh's Mills. If a

[102] *Southern Star 14/9/1929*

water supply were provided, the sewer would be extended to the cottages. Only one house on Chapel Road required drainage, and it was a considerable distance from the village. A proposal to extend the sewer to that house at a cost of £145 was rejected some years ago. The engineer had nothing further to report about the drainage of Douglas village, on which Dr Saunders had reported fully and favourably some time ago. It was decided that the engineer should consult with the City Engineer regarding the extension of the Corporation's main to Donnybrook.

Applications for water supplies at Model Farm Road and Rathankard, Monkstown, were referred to the medical officers and engineer for reports. Dr J. Barry, Medical Officer for Midleton (No. 2 district), reported on the condition of the pond near Cove (Cobh) Junction. He had inspected the place on several occasions. A pipe from the adjacent premises of Mr R. Beamish, Ashtonbourne, discharged some matter into the pond. Due to the small outflow from the pond through the drain passing under the railway station to tidal waters, the water was more or less stagnant, occasionally producing an offensive smell. This created a nuisance that might become injurious to the health of the occupiers of the railway stationmaster's house, situated only a few yards from the pond's margin. The engineer said the nuisance could be addressed by erecting a septic tank. Mr Corry moved, and Mr Mullins seconded, that a septic tank be erected. The motion was unanimously adopted.[103]

The October 1929 monthly meeting of the full Cork County Board of Health was held at the Courthouse a few days later. Mr Wm. J. Broderick (chairman) presided. Dr Condy, County Medical Officer of Health, in his report, stated that the sanitary conditions in Fennell's Cove area were reviewed by Mr O'Flynn in November 1928. Alternative schemes for water and sewerage systems had been submitted to the Southern Committee, but no material changes had occurred since then. The majority of houses in the district were of semi-permanent construction and occupied only seasonally.

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[103] *Cork Examiner 8/10/1929*

The scheme suggested by Mr O'Flynn — protecting existing springs and erecting fountains, alongside the installation of a domestic scavenging system for pail closets — appeared to be the most suitable and economical for the area and, in his opinion, should be pursued. Regarding his report of 8th April on the water supply to Newmarket, Dr Condy noted that the three pumps had received attention from the engineer on several occasions. However, frequent chemical and bacteriological examinations of the water had produced conflicting results, particularly regarding the Main Street and spout pumps, which could not be explained by a sanitary survey of the surroundings. The town lacked a proper sewerage system, and the existing sewage disposal was extremely insanitary. In light of these facts, Dr Condy had urged the Board to further consider providing a proper gravitation water supply and an efficient sewerage system for the district, as this was urgently needed to safeguard public health. The Medical Officer also requested the appointment of a full-time clerk for office work.

The Chairman asked if the cost of the Newmarket water supply would be charged as an area expense. The Secretary stated there was a dispute about this. Mr J. Daly said there was no dispute: it was proposed to make it a North Cork area charge, but the majority disagreed. Since other districts had already provided schemes and borne their costs, it was considered unfair to burden them with the costs of a new district scheme. Therefore, it was decided that the charge should fall on the Newmarket Dispensary District. The North Cork Engineer, Mr Coughlan, pointed out that an alternative supply was now being considered from Mount Keeffe, which would reduce costs by approximately £1,000. The Chairman said, under these circumstances, the matter would be referred back to the North Cork Board for final consideration regarding costs and charges. It was hoped that in future the Committee would be granted executive powers to deal with such local matters directly.

A discussion followed regarding the appointment of a permanent veterinary officer to inspect meat and slaughterhouses for the Cork Rural, Mallow, and Macroom districts. It was noted that five such officers already worked

in some districts, performing similar duties. The County Medical Officer expressed the view that one full-time officer should be appointed to cover all such work. Mr Hinchin asked if this would mean dismissing the five existing officers. The Chairman replied that it mostly likely would. Mr Hinchin then asked if those officers would be entitled to superannuation or pensions. The Chairman replied in the negative, adding that "they are entitled to nothing under the Act."

Messrs Daly and Hinchin argued that, in their opinion, it would be very unfair to dismiss the officers. Dr Condy suggested that if the workload was too great for one officer, the Cork Rural position could be amalgamated with the city position. It was decided to put the matter on the agenda for consideration at a future meeting.

Regarding the Charleville housing scheme, it was agreed, on the motion of Mr J. Daly, seconded by Mr K. Kelly, to forward the tenders received to the Local Government Department and request that steps be taken to expedite the building of thirty-five houses under the scheme. Mr J. Barry, M.C.C., attended in connection with this matter and thanked the secretary and Mr J. Daly, T.D., for interviewing departmental representatives, as well as the chairman and Board members for their efforts in trying to get the scheme underway.

A letter was read from the Ministry concerning the recommended appointments of Miss Josephine Barry as home assistance officer, and Mr J. G. O'Brien as sanitary sub-officer and rent collector for the Mallow area. The Ministry noted that these three positions were originally held by Mr Batt Barry and suggested that local authorities should co-operate to fill these offices with one person. Mr J. Daly explained that the North Cork Board of Assistance made the home assistance appointment, while the North Cork Committee of Health made the other two appointments. These were two distinct bodies. The positions were worth £210 annually, and the members believed they could provide two people with a living wage by making two appointments at approximately £100 each per year. It was decided to

inform the Ministry of the circumstances and to request their sanction for the appointments. On the motion of Mr R. Daly, approval was given for the bye-laws governing the provision of houses in the county health district.[104]

By November, an editorial appeared in the '*Cork Examiner*' referring to the business carried out by the Cork County Board of Health. The writer commenced by noting that at a November meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, Dr Condy, County Medical Officer of Health, reported that he had received notifications from several dispensary districts of infectious diseases, principally scarlatina, diphtheria, scarlet fever, typhoid, and pneumonia. The writer asserted that the members present, and the general public would undoubtedly have agreed, considered this a very serious state of affairs. The contributor argued that the first question one naturally asked was whether there must have been some underlying cause for these widespread and frequently recurring epidemics. The writer pointed out that, upon reading the Engineer's report presented at the same meeting — which revealed that Donnybrook village, with over sixty houses, had no sanitary arrangements and only a single well located two hundred yards away — the public should not only have been surprised at the existence of such epidemics but should also have been inclined to congratulate themselves that large proportions of the population were not wiped out yearly by disease.

The editorial emphasised that when such conditions existed in a densely populated district so close to the city as Donnybrook, one could only have shuddered to imagine the sanitary conditions in more outlying areas. The contributor lamented that, according to the report, improvements had been considered some years prior but were never carried out because the Rural Council and the city Corporation could not agree on which body should bear the costs.

The writer expressed strong disapproval of this situation, describing it as a "sorry condition of things" in a county that had prided itself on intelligence and efficiency. The

[104] *Cork Examiner 15/10/1929*

contributor argued that it was unacceptable that bad sanitary conditions — which likely caused the start and propagation of numerous past epidemics — remained unaddressed because two public bodies, whose primary duty was to safeguard community health, failed to decide who should spend public funds to improve living conditions and thus public health. At the same meeting, the contributor noted, Mr O'Flynn had highlighted the necessity for twenty-seven new fire hydrants in the Blackrock, Douglas, and Bishopstown areas. The writer asserted that if such a large number of hydrants was necessary, it must be concluded that the prevailing arrangements were entirely inadequate.

The contributor argued that when sanitary conditions — which should have been the foremost concern of public bodies — remained in a primitive state, the fire protection organisation was unlikely to have been in a high state of efficiency. They emphasised that fire protection was second only in importance to the health of the community, and no time should have been lost in raising it to the highest possible standard. The editorial expressed gratification that Mr O'Flynn and Mr Farrington had been consulting on the best ways to remedy these deplorable conditions. The contributor stated they had had no doubt that if local authorities had carried out the recommendations of these capable officers, there would have been significant improvements in both sanitation and, directly as a result, the health of residents in the affected areas.

Finally, the writer strongly emphasised that there had already been far too much procrastination and mere "bandying of words" regarding these urgent public necessities. They urged that it was high time the local authorities realised that this state of affairs must have been corrected with the least possible delay.[105]

Later that month, at an adjourned monthly meeting of the Cork County Board of Health held at the Courthouse, Capt. Collins (Vice-Chairman) presided. A report was submitted by Dr Robert Condy, County Medical Officer of Health, during

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[105] *Cork Examiner 6/11/1929*

which he referred to cases of enteric fever in the Allihies, Millstreet, Charleville, and Cork areas. In most instances, the sanitary conditions associated with the areas in which these cases had occurred were grossly defective. The incidence of enteric fever was noted to be directly proportional to the presence, or absence, of proper water supplies and sewerage systems. No other measures were considered as effective in reducing the disease as the provision of safe water and modern sanitary arrangements. A high incidence of the disease was described as a reproach to preventive medicine and to the Health Authorities concerned, since it was almost entirely preventable. Regarding schools, the report stated that the sanitary conditions in many were of a most primitive type. In the town of Charleville, the conditions of the closets in the National School were allegedly so revolting that scholars and teachers were liable to suffer in health. The stench emanating from the structures, which had not been cleaned for years, was described as so unbearable that the adjacent windows were habitually kept closed in all seasons. In the absence of a water supply and sewerage system, it had been of little use to make representations to the manager for abatement of the nuisance. It was also outlined that overcrowding was quite common in several school premises that had been inspected.

On the topic of meat inspection, the Medical Officer reported that in eight towns across the county (excluding urban areas), veterinary surgeons had been appointed in a part-time capacity under various Acts. It was recommended that the meat inspection scheme could best be implemented by selecting towns where a part-time veterinary surgeon was already based. The scheme could be operated at small additional cost, by utilising the officer in each area, and adopting the model bye-laws, as issued by the Local Government Department, which would allow for inspection and stamping of all meat intended for sale within defined areas. If any scheme of meat inspection were undertaken, it was proposed that it be governed by those byelaws to ensure efficiency and minimal expense. The towns suggested for the scheme included Bandon, Charleville, Kanturk, Millstreet, Mitchelstown, Bantry, Castletown, and Dunmanway. As the Board had already applied for and obtained urban powers for

Bantry, it would be necessary to apply for similar powers for the remaining areas—or ideally for the entire County Health district. In the meantime, the scheme was to proceed in Bantry, where conditions were reported to be highly unsatisfactory. The Chairman stated that definite action should be taken on the question of meat inspection. Dr Condy noted that Waterford had adopted the model byelaws and recommended that Cork do likewise. On the motion of Mr Kelly, seconded by Mr O'Donovan, it was decided to apply to the Local Government Department for similar powers and to seek urban powers for the entire County of Cork.

With regard to dental treatment, it was reported that seven dentists had applied for appointment following an advertisement—one from Cork City, and the others from different parts of the County. Mr Hunt of Cork City offered to travel the county in a mobile dental clinic with his own equipment, working seven days per month, attending to 32 cases per day, at a rate of £3 per day—amounting to about £420 per annum. The other applicants offered to undertake cases within their own and adjacent districts, charging between 1s and 4s per case. Dr Condy expressed the view that appointing one dentist to serve the entire county on a regular basis would be most effective. The Secretary inquired whether any of the expenses would be reimbursed. Dr Condy replied that half the cost would be recouped by the Government. The Secretary added that he was not aware that the Board had yet made provision for dental services. On the motion of Mr Kelly, seconded by Mr Walsh, it was agreed to refer the matter to the three Committees of the Board of Health for their observations.

The next matter dealt with the welfare of the blind under the relevant Act. The Law Agent had already reviewed the Act and also outlined the County Board’s duties, including designating institutions for patients and fixing the rates of payment for their care and treatment. Mr Daly asked about the cost of implementing the scheme. The Law Agent confirmed that it would have to be funded by the County administration. Mr Kelly asked whether the pension of a blind person taken into an institution would contribute to

their upkeep, or whether the full cost would fall on the local rates. The Chairman stated he did not believe the entire maintenance would fall on the rates. In response to further questions, the Law Agent clarified that the scheme covered unemployed or necessitous blind persons living in their own homes, or in lodgings. It was decided to defer consideration of the matter to the next meeting in order to determine the cost of institutional care and the number of relevant cases. The Secretary announced that he had received notification from the Appointments Commissioners recommending Miss Johanna Murphy, 66 Gillibrand Street, Chorley, Lancashire, for appointment as a public health nurse in County Cork. It was highlighted that Miss Murphy was born in Drishane, Co. Cork.

Correspondence was received from the Local Government Department regarding tenders for the erection of houses in or near Charleville, which had been submitted for approval. The Government had proposed a grant and had approved the lowest tender under the scheme. The Secretary stated that it had been proposed to reduce the grant to £60 per house, but following intervention by Mr Daly, T.D., at the Board's request, the amount was restored to £80. Mr Hinchin stated that the people of Charleville owed thanks to Mr Daly for his assistance, and noted that this was not the first time Mr Daly had intervened helpfully. It was agreed to apply for a loan of £7,500 to cover the cost of building the cottages. A separate letter from the Department stated that approval had been received for the erection of 20 cottages—ten each in the Clonakilty and Skibbereen districts—with Government grants of £80 per cottage. The West Cork Committee had already passed the scheme and made its recommendation, and the Board expressed approval.

Mr P. Crowley, M.C.C., Bandon, and Mr T. J. Murphy, T.D. M.C.C. (both of Labour), sought approval for a loan of £1,800 to be levied from the Electoral Division of Bandon, for a sewerage scheme in the town. Residents in the area had long petitioned for such improvements, and both the County Medical Officer of Health and the Engineer had previously recommended this specific project. The town had reportedly

been in a deplorable sanitary condition. The application for such was approved as a result.[106]

In February 1930, the first meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health for that year was held. The Engineer, Mr O'Flynn, B.E., reported on the condition of a cottage at Longstone, Whitechurch, which had been previously discussed on several occasions. The cottage was at that time uninhabited and in a derelict condition. It had previously been sold by the Committee to the farmer on whose land it had been erected. However, a recent inspection by a Local Government Department inspector prompted further review. Mr O'Flynn stated that, some months prior, the cottage had been occupied by an itinerant cabinet maker who was now residing there. He estimated the cost of necessary repairs to be £112 19s. The Department's inspector, Mr Hickie, reported that the cottage had no woodwork remaining—doors, windows, floors, and joists were all missing. The roof was in poor condition but could be repaired. The inspector noted that applying painted mastic would provide a reasonably permanent solution. He further reported that the cottage had apparently been occupied for the past two years by a man named O'Brien and his wife, without any rent being paid. Mrs O'Brien stated that she would be willing to pay a rent of 3s. 6d. or 4s. per week if the cottage were put into a habitable condition. The Department requested that the County Board of Health consider restoring the cottage and appointing the prevailing occupier as tenant. Mr O'Flynn noted that the cottage had not been inhabited for many years. The Secretary confirmed that it had scarcely ever been occupied since its construction. Two or three tenants had been appointed in the past, but each had left after only a few months. Mr O'Riordan, the cottage rent collector, reported that O'Brien and his wife had been living in the property for about a year. Mr Corry stated that the cost of the proposed repairs would be sufficient to build a new cottage. The Chairman expressed doubt that the Department could compel the Board to spend public funds on what he described as a worthless building. In response to Mr Corry, the Secretary stated that there had not been a 'bona fide' tenant

[106] *Cork Examiner 19/11/1929*

in the cottage for 25 years. The Chairman suggested that the Secretary should reply to the Department, stating that the Board had considered the matter.[107]

The following week, a full meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held in the County Council Chamber, Washington St. Courthouse, Cork city centre. The Secretary, Mr E. Callanan, reported that the Northern Committee had recommended seeking a loan for the repair of labourers' cottages in their district. Notice of motion had been given by Mr Daly to give effect to the proposal. In the meantime, the committee intended to interview the local bank manager regarding the proposal. Until the proposal was available, the motion could not be proceeded with, but it would be listed on the agenda for the next meeting. Mr J. Daly stated that there was no immediate urgency, as a rate for the repairs had already been struck for the prevailing year. Mr John Daly urged that the scheme for the erection of 256 new labourers' cottages in the Fermoy Rural District—already passed on his motion—should be progressed immediately. The Secretary undertook to communicate at once with the Secretary of the North Cork Board of Health regarding the proposal. Mr Daly emphasised the urgent need for these cottages in the district. Arising from the minutes of the North Cork Committee of Health, the Board considered a motion by Mr John Barry requesting the Department to hold an inquiry into the application for a water supply and sewerage scheme for Charleville. The Board of Education had reportedly agreed to provide a grant of £400. The Secretary pointed out that there was no definite scheme at that time in place. Mr Lynch questioned who had suggested that a grant of £400 was forthcoming from the Board of Education. Mr Maurice Daly replied that the claim had come from Mr John Barry of Charleville. Mr Lynch remarked that the Board should not be continually troubled by what he termed the idiosyncrasies of Mr Barry, and described the proposal as a figment of imagination. Mr J. Daly noted that Charleville was a very small area and stated that a combined burden of £12,000–£13,000 for the water scheme and £7,500 for a housing scheme would place an undue financial strain on the locality.

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[107] *Cork Examiner 4/2/1930*

He advised delaying the project until the Shannon water scheme was operational, adding that Charleville had ample water flowing through it and that the only requirement would be an apparatus to pump water to an elevated reservoir above the town. Mr R. Daly added that there was already a copious natural supply. Mr Lynch stated that the matter should be considered only after the North Cork Committee had fulfilled its responsibilities.

Regarding the proposed appointment of a caretaker for the Castletownroche Waterworks, the minutes of the North Cork Committee showed that five applications had been received. David Roche of Castletownroche was appointed by vote—four members voted for Roche and two for another applicant, J. W. Magnier. Thomas Butler, who had been the temporary caretaker, was also an applicant and had been recommended for the position by the Engineer, Mr O'Flynn. Mr Maurice Daly (Assistant Secretary, North Cork Board of Health) stated that Butler had originally been appointed during the installation of the pumping engine and had remained in charge until the completion of the contract. Responsibility had since been handed over to the Board's Engineer, Mr Coughlan, who had advertised the post. Following this process, Roche was appointed. The Chairman proposed, and Mr P. Donovan seconded, the ratification of the Committee's recommendation. Mr J. Daly stated that he had voted for Butler in accordance with the Engineer's recommendation but, as a member of the North Cork Committee, he would not object to promoting their chosen candidate. However, he reiterated that he had supported Butler because he was considered fit and suitable for the role. Mr Lynch argued that the North Cork Board should provide justification for their decision and proposed that the matter be referred back for further information. Mr J. Daly added that he had been in the minority at the meeting. Mr R. Daly expressed the view that Butler had fulfilled his duties satisfactorily and should not be dismissed after performing well in the role. Mr Lynch stated that more evidence was needed regarding the dismissal of Butler, who had held the post for nine months. He warned that in the event of a failure at the waterworks, responsibility would rest with the County Board. Mr Maurice Daly clarified that four members had voted for Roche, while four had

abstained. Mr R. Daly suggested that the Chairman should withdraw his motion and refer the matter back to the North Cork regional Board for further clarification. On a division, the Chairman's motion was defeated, with three voting against and two in favour. Mr John Daly abstained. Mr Hurley concluded by stating that he would not go against the advice of the Engineer, adding that if the Board disregarded expert opinion, it had no business convening.[108]

Mr. W.J. Broderick chaired the May 1930 meeting of the Cork County Board of Public Health. As discussed at this convening, in relation to the Southern Committee's proposal to secure a suitable water supply for the village of Ballingeary, it was reported that the Secretary of the Committee had, in accordance with the Committee's decision, written to the Secretaries of the Departments of Finance, Education, and Local Government. The application sought a government grant of £900—half the projected cost of a proposed £1,800 water supply scheme for the village. The Committee considered the scheme of national importance, as the water was needed primarily for national teachers attending the Munster College during the summer months. It was further noted that the Munster Feis was to be held in Ballingeary in early August, and the works were requested to be completed before 1st August. In response, Mr J. Stenson, Assistant Secretary to the Department of Local Government, wrote that he was directed by the Minister for Local Government and Public Health to acknowledge receipt of the Board's letter, regarding the proposed water supply scheme for Ballingeary. He set out to state that there was no fund at the Department's disposal from which a contribution could be made for works of this nature. The Minister was, therefore, unable to accede to the request for a grant in that instance. However, the Assistant Secretary noted that the Minister was prepared to consider an application from the Board of Health for a loan from the Local Loans Fund, repayable over a 25-year period. A form for the application had been enclosed, and it was requested that plans, specifications, and a cost estimate be submitted as soon as possible. The matter would then receive full consideration.

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[108] *Evening Echo 10/2/1930*

The Secretary noted that all correspondence would now be returned to the Southern Committee for reconsideration and recommendation. The Chairman stated he would not favour placing a £900 charge on the ratepayers of the Macroom District for such a scheme. Since the Committee's proposal relied on securing £900 from the Government, and this had now been declined, he ruled the recommendation out of order. Mr R. Daly asked whether the recommendation had been sent to three departments. The Secretary to the Southern Committee then read the formal resolution adopted by that body. Moved by Mr Mullins and seconded by Mr O'Donovan, the resolution declared the scheme as absolutely necessary from national, economic, and Gaelic-speaking perspectives. It proposed that the £1,800 cost be equally shared between the Committee and the Government. As the grant was refused, the Board agreed to refer the matter back to the Southern Committee for further consideration.

In reviewing the monthly report on slaughterhouse and meat shop inspections, Mr R. Daly commented positively on the Midleton district, where not a single pound of meat was condemned or seized. He noted that the inspection had been unannounced and praised the high standard of meat available to the public. He commended the local butchers and farmers for maintaining quality. The Chairman added that Youghal could be equally commended. Mr Daly remarked that the outcome also reflected well on the Department of Agriculture and those responsible for rearing the cattle. Mr B. W. Brasier appeared before the Board to raise concerns about the water supply in Churchtown South. The prevailing supply was believed to be contaminated, and residents were unable to access clean water. Engineer Mr O'Flynn reported that Dr Condy was preparing a report on the matter. Mr Brasier pointed out that Dr Condy had visited the site six months earlier, yet the issue remained unresolved. Mr R. Daly stated that he had previously raised the issue and understood that a report had already been submitted. Mr O'Flynn confirmed he had reported on the matter twice and had also spoken to Dr Condy a fortnight earlier.

In June, Mr. T. Corcoran, M.C.C. (Chairman), presided over a meeting of the South Cork Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, which took place in the Bankruptcy Court, Cork City. The Chairman opened the meeting by referring to the death of Mrs. O'Flynn, wife of Mr. B. O'Flynn, B.E., the Board's engineer. On the motion of Mr. R. Daly, seconded by Mr. M. Buckley and supported by Messrs. Carey and Ahern, the committee passed a resolution expressing their condolences, and a copy of the resolution was directed to be sent to Mr. O'Flynn. The Secretary associated himself with the expression of sympathy. The Engineer reported that he had inspected a cottage at Ballycourannaig, in the Bandon rural district, which was formerly occupied by a man named Hartnett and was then let to Jerh. O'Connor. The cottage was in a very poor state of dilapidation, with little remaining except the walls, roof, two doors, and part of the floor. He estimated the cost of repairs at £59 17s. The Secretary stated that the tenant could not be found at the cottage. The Chairman commented that the former tenant was a tramp, and expressed uncertainty as to how the cottage had been allowed to fall into ruin. Mr. Carey suggested that the repairs should be carried out and, as no tender had been received, recommended referring the matter to the Clerk of Works to arrange for the necessary work. Mr. Barry, the Clerk of Works, stated he would likely be able to find a contractor. The committee agreed to proceed as suggested by Mr. Carey, excluding the outhouses from the repairs. An order was also made directing the Secretary to notify the Civic Guards about repeated damage to a pump at Killard, which served numerous nearby cottages. The Engineer reported that for the second time, the pump had been deliberately damaged by pebbles being thrown into the hinge hole of the handle, which caused the pump rods to break. Repairs could not be made without lifting out the entire pump, which required erecting lifting gear at considerable expense. The Engineer reported that he had fined a contractor £5 for negligent execution of the scavenging contract in Bishopstown, as provided in the specifications. The Board approved of this action. Regarding the water supply to Inchigeela village, the Engineer stated that the village had been supplied by both an old dug-out well and a bore well. The bore well's water, which was pumped using a windmill and flowed to a village

fountain, had been condemned as unfit for consumption. Dr. Gould, M.O.H., recommended removing the pump head to prevent people from continuing to use the contaminated water. The bore well, originally drilled by the Macroom Urban District Council, was 180 feet deep and had not yielded water until the Engineer detonated gelignite at the bottom. A few days after the explosion, it yielded 250 gallons daily, which later increased to 3,300 gallons per day, at which point the windmill was installed. The Engineer planned to conduct further tests to determine whether the yield had increased and if extra pumping was needed. The Board referred the matter back to the Engineer for follow-up. A report on the performance of the Clerks of Works—Messrs. Simon Twomey, John Barry, and James Roche—was presented by the Engineer. Simon Twomey was responsible for the rural districts of Youghal, Midleton, and Cobh, as far as the Glashaboy River. There were 1,100 cottages in his district. In the year ending 31st March 1930, he had 146 repaired at a cost of £1,030, with 135 more under repair under contracts valued at £1,080, and £102 10s. spent on urgent and storm damage repairs. The Engineer criticised the quality of the cottage work, stating he had often needed to condemn work that Twomey had approved and to order additional work that should have been included in the specifications. However, Twomey had handled waterworks and pump-related duties very satisfactorily. John Barry, who covered the rural districts of Kinsale and parts of Cork and Bandon, had responsibility for 1,800 cottages. He had 215 repaired during the year at a cost of £1,110 5s. 7d, with 130 more under repair under contracts valued at £1,154 3s. 1d. Although Barry's work was not entirely satisfactory, the Engineer acknowledged some improvement. Barry was found to provide insufficient supervision during work and often omitted necessary items from specifications. Apart from occasional burial ground inspections, he performed few duties outside of cottage repairs.

Meanwhile, James Roche, who managed the rural district of Macroom and part of Bandon, oversaw 701 cottages. He repaired 244 during the year at a cost of £2,177 15s., with 84 more under repair under contracts worth £977 12s. Roche's performance was considered fairly good given the challenges

of his district. He sometimes missed obvious repairs in his specifications but appeared to supervise the work itself well. He had occasionally attributed omissions to damage occurring after inspections, and the Engineer acknowledged that this was sometimes accurate. The Engineer noted the scarcity of contractors willing to take on cottage repair work, which caused significant delays. Good contractors were overburdened, and unsatisfactory ones often delayed completion by failing to follow specifications.

The Chairman described the report as very important, and suggested deferring discussion for another month. Mr. Buckley recommended that the Clerks of Works be sent copies and asked to reply. The Secretary noted that the Department of Local Government and the County Board of Health had requested the report and that none of the three officers had yet been officially sanctioned. Mr. Daly pointed out that some cottages were undergoing repairs and that the matter could not be indefinitely delayed. Mr. Ahern suggested that any report should include specific charges linked to particular cottages. The Chairman concluded that the matter should not be pursued further at that time, and that the Clerks should respond in writing, and attend the next County Board of Health meeting. Cottage Rent Collector J. O'Leary reported that Ellen Long, the tenant of a cottage at Ahiohill, planned to marry and leave the district. She requested to transfer the cottage to her first cousin, Denis O'Reilly, who had been living with her. The Chairman rejected the request firmly, stating that they would not assign the cottage to a relative and directed that possession be regained. The Chairman questioned Cottage Rent Collector Gleeson about a cottage in Carberytown, allegedly vacant for two years, and fallen into ruin without being reported. Gleeson replied that the cottage was only temporarily vacant and that the tenant planned to resume occupancy. He had reported the vacancy two months prior. The Chairman rebuked him, stating that the neglect would cost the ratepayers £60–£70 in repairs and condemned the failure to report the vacancy sooner. Mr. Daly affirmed that it had been the collector's duty to report the situation. The Chairman warned that failure to perform duties would lead to consequences.

The Chairman proposed that the Secretary would write to all cottage rent collectors, instructing them to report the number of unoccupied cottages in their districts and their condition. Mr. Daly added they should also report on repair needs. The Secretary confirmed that such requests had previously been made. The Chairman warned that any failure to comply would result in suspensions, with further actions possible through the County Board of Health. The proposal was agreed to. Regarding the proposed extension of Carrigaline graveyard, the Board's solicitors, Messrs. J.C. and A. Blake, stated that the Engineer had informed them Mr. Cogan, the landowner, sought £40 for his interest in the adjacent land. On the Chairman's motion, seconded by Mr. M. Buckley, the Board agreed to take over the old graveyard and acquire an acre of adjoining land for extension, borrowing £350 for the purpose. The Engineer was authorised to negotiate the purchase. On the motion of Mr. Crowley, seconded by Mr. Mullins, T.D., the Dispensary District of Innishannon was confirmed as the area liable for the cost of water improvements at Crossharry. However, the Board rejected another motion by Mr. Crowley, seconded by Mr. Ahern, to increase the salary of Thos. Searles, caretaker of Ballymodan burial ground, from £4 to £5 annually. On Mr. Carey's motion, the Board agreed to carry out immediate £3 repairs on the Lisquinlan cottage occupied by Patrick Cashman, due to concerns about the health of his children. The Department of Local Government and Public Health informed the Board that no grant was available to support the Ballingeary water scheme. However, the Minister would consider a loan repayable over 25 years. The Chairman expressed frustration, noting that the Board had offered to share costs on the basis that Ballingeary was a centre for Irish-language instruction and attracted summer visitors. He believed they had been fair in offering to cover half the cost and criticised the Government for not matching their effort. Mr. Donovan suggested the matter was one for the Board of Health. The Chairman acknowledged this but pointed out they were subject to the oversight of a higher Board. Mr. Mullins questioned the loan's terms and was told by the Secretary that the Local Loans Fund charged 5.75% interest. Mr. Daly said this rate was prohibitive, and the Chairman concluded it

would be impossible to proceed under such conditions. Mr. Mullins disagreed, arguing that the urgency of public health justified the expenditure. He maintained that the Government had neglected their role, and that the Board should assume the responsibility. Mr. Donovan supported this view, calling it a national as well as a local duty. Mr. Mullins reiterated the importance of the issue, citing the risk of epidemic and the sanitary condition of Ballingeary. On Mr. Ahern's suggestion, the matter was referred to Macroom area representatives for further input. Concerning public lighting in the Douglas and Blackrock Electoral Divisions, the Electricity Supply Board responded that their domestic supply charges did not reflect the costs of public lighting, which involved not only electricity but also installation, maintenance, and repairs. The Chairman noted the Board had offered to light the villages such as Cloyne and Ballinderrin at £3 per lamp, and suggested asking for similar terms in other South Cork areas where no mains installation was needed. The Secretary was directed to write to the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) accordingly.[109]

Also in June of that year, Mr W. J. Broderick (Chairman) presided over a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, held in the County Council Chamber at the Courthouse in Cork City centre. When the minutes and recommendations from the Northern, Southern, and Western Committees of the Board of Health came under review, Mr Hurley objected to proceeding with the North Cork Committee's business. He claimed that he had not received a copy of that committee's minutes and proposed adjourning consideration of its recommendations. Captain Collins seconded the motion, affirming he too had not received the minutes. Mr Hinchin opposed the adjournment, stating that the minutes had been distributed. Mr R. Daly, Assistant Secretary to the North Cork Committee, claimed it was not his fault, as he had not sent out the minutes himself. Mr E. Callanan, Secretary to the Board, confirmed he had received the Northern Committee's minutes on 6th June. Mr Hinchin asked Mr Hurley to withdraw his motion, but Mr Hurley refused, noting he had received the West Cork Committee minutes on

[109] *Cork Examiner 3/6/1930*

Saturday but none from North Cork. The Chairman ruled that the Board would proceed with the minutes from the South and West Cork Committees. Mr Hinchin stated he would ring the Secretary of the North Cork Board. Mr Daly remarked that Mr Hurley could not be contradicted by telephone. Mr Hurley insisted they would not take up North Cork matters that day. Mr Hinchin disagreed, saying the County Board of Health had authority. Mr Hurley responded that North Cork should handle its own business. Mr Hinchin noted that the North Cork representatives had never interfered with other districts. Mr Hurley claimed they did not even recognise the North Cork Committee as more than an internal body. Mr Daly reminded everyone that the specific meeting was of the Cork County Board of Health. The Chairman described the matter as serious, emphasising that while local committee members might know what was occurring, County Board members could not be expected to follow developments without access to the minutes. He stressed the importance of ensuring all members received the minutes ahead of meetings. The Secretary was directed to instruct all Committee Secretaries to issue minutes to Board members in time for future meetings. The Board then addressed the recommendations within the West Cork Committee's minutes. The Secretary reported that the Board's engineer, Mr O'Flynn, had suffered a severe personal bereavement due to the death of his wife, explaining his absence. On the motion of Mr R. Kelly, seconded by Mr M. Walsh and supported by the Chairman and other members, a resolution was passed expressing sympathy to Mr O'Flynn and his family.

Regarding rent collection for labourers' cottages in West Cork, the Department had written urging greater progress. Mr O'Mahony, Assistant Clerk to the West Cork Board, stated that arrears had been significantly reduced. The Chairman acknowledged this progress, with the Secretary adding that the improvement had been considerable. The Chairman was satisfied with the progress made. The meeting then considered a Western Committee recommendation that all cottage repairs be completed by 1st November. Mr R. Kelly explained this timing was intended to ensure work occurred during the appropriate season. Mr O'Mahony

clarified that clerks of works had additional responsibilities, including pump and sewer repairs, and recommended that their employment continue for a further year. Mr Lynch questioned the feasibility of completing repairs by the proposed deadline. The Chairman stated that, eventually, all cottages should be in good condition, at which point engineers could handle oversight.

Discussion followed on whether clerks of works should remain employed or be used on a needs basis. Mr Lynch pointed out that it would depend on the amount and type of work required. Mr O'Mahony stated that the Western Committee's Chairman wanted clerks of works to submit reports on completed repairs by 1st November. Mr Lynch noted this condition should apply to future contracts, but the Chairman stated it already applied to prevailing ones. The Chairman pointed out a contradiction in the Western Committee's recommendations: the suggestion to complete work by 1st November and the simultaneous proposal to retain clerks of works for another year. He proposed that clerks of works submit confirmation to their respective engineers that particular works had been completed. If the engineer's inspection revealed defects, the clerk of works would be penalised by having the engineer's mileage allowance surcharge deducted. Mr Lynch added that the engineer should suspend any clerk of works who failed in their duties. The Chairman further stated that in such cases, the contractor's final payment certificate should be withheld until proper repairs were completed. He noted a 90% improvement in oversight over the past three years, with far fewer complaints. Ultimately, the Board agreed—on the motion of Mr Lynch, seconded by Mr Hinchin—to seek ministerial approval to retain the three clerks of works in West Cork in a temporary capacity for another twelve months. The Chairman emphasised that clerks of works should only be employed when cottage repair work was required.

The Board then considered Dr Condy's report on the qualifications of Jerh. Connolly for the position of sanitary sub-officer in the Skibbereen district. Dr Condy stated that Mr Connolly lacked the necessary training and knowledge,

displayed carelessness, and could not be recommended for permanent appointment. The West Cork Board had recommended that Mr Connolly be asked to explain his performance and that a report be sought from the local medical officer. The Chairman remarked that the local officer could not assess Mr Connolly's qualifications. Further consideration was deferred until Dr Collins, the district medical officer, submitted his report.

The County Board had approved a West Cork Committee recommendation to fix rent for ten new cottages each in the Clonakilty and Skibbereen districts at 2 shillings per week, pending departmental approval. Mr O'Mahony noted the estimated cost to ratepayers would be about £17. The Chairman stated that the rent should be economically viable. Mr Hurley insisted agricultural labourers could not afford higher rents and that the cottages should serve their intended purpose. Regarding the proposed permanent appointment of Mr D. O'Donovan as rent collector, the Department had replied that it would consider the matter once the substantial arrears in his district were addressed. Nevertheless, the Board approved the West Cork Committee's recommendation to request sanction for his appointment, noting that he had reduced arrears from £1,556 3s. 4d. in 1928 to £688 9s. 0d. by 31st March. The Board noted an entry in the West Cork Committee's minutes indicating that a bailiff could not enforce a possession order for a cottage occupied by John Foley of Drumkeen, as a medical certificate had been produced stating the tenant's mother was unfit for removal. A similar case had arisen with a Mrs Keating. The Western Committee recommended that Dr Condy medically examine both individuals. Mr O'Mahony stated that Foley had occupied the cottage for about eight years without paying rent. Mr Callanan described Foley as extremely clever, having outwitted several legal attempts to remove him. Mr Hurley joked that Foley must be a hard case if he could outsmart some of the local legal minds, prompting laughter. The Chairman stated that it was not actually Dr Condy's responsibility to conduct the medical inspections, and the matter was referred back to the West Cork Committee. Mr J. Barry, M.C.C., from Charleville, appeared before the Board to discuss the construction of thirty-five houses in the area.

He reported that the contractor had completed the required bonds and specifications. Mr Exham, the Board's legal adviser, explained that new plans had been prepared and approved by Mr Coughlan, the North Cork Board's engineer. These differed from the original plans, which had specified masonry walls; the new ones had called for concrete construction. Mr Buttimer had submitted three tenders, the lowest of which had been accepted. The Chairman noted that the scheme involved approximately £10,000.[110]

The annual meeting of the Cork County Board of Health had taken place in late July, during which the County Medical Officer of Health, in his report, had addressed in detail the issue of school medical services. This was the subject of an editorial piece in the '*Cork Examiner*.' In the view of the writer, the main purpose of medical inspection of schoolchildren was not only to prevent outbreaks of epidemics, but also to ensure that every boy and girl, upon leaving school, would possess a sound and healthy body. Without good health, the writer argued, even the most thorough education was of limited value. The writer also believed that children, up to the time they began school, ought to have been covered by a comprehensive maternity and child welfare scheme. In this way, from birth until the conclusion of their education, no child would have been without some form of medical oversight. To achieve this, the writer contended that a certain level of public expenditure had to be accepted. In their opinion, the only instance in which some degree of extravagance by public bodies might have been justified was in the improvement of public health. According to the writer, for health services to be truly effective, they needed to be thorough and well-supported. However, this was considered nearly impossible so long as public representatives maintained what the writer described as a parsimonious attitude toward health spending. That mindset, the writer believed, greatly diminished the services' potential and prevented them from achieving the level of success that was both possible and widely desired.[111]

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[110] *Cork Examiner 11/6/1930*

[111] *Cork Examiner 29/7/1930*

As reported by the '*Southern Star*,' during the August 1930 meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, Mr. Lynch raised the issue that neither the Northern nor Southern areas of the Board of Health had the services of an assistant Medical Officer of Health in any capacity. In response, the Secretary explained that one of the assistant medical officers, Dr. Maguire, had departed, while the other, Dr. Fitzpatrick, was at that time acting as Superintendent Medical Officer of Health in place of Dr. Condy, who was on holiday at that time. Mr. Hinchin asked whether Dr. Fitzpatrick had not also resigned following a promotion to another position. The Secretary replied that Dr. Fitzpatrick was presently acting on behalf of Dr. Condy under the direction of the Department. Mr. Lynch maintained that the Northern and Southern areas were entitled to the services of assistant medical officers. He recalled that the Board had decided Dr. A. Buckley should serve as 'locum tenens' for Dr. Condy. However, the Chairman noted that the Minister had refused that arrangement. Mr. Lynch questioned whether another public body, specifically the Cork County Council, had the authority to interfere with the Board's decisions in the administration of public health services by making appointments to carry them out. The Secretary explained that the Council had decided not to fill the assistant position that had become vacant. However, the Local Government Department had written to say that this decision was not in accordance with the terms of the public grant received from the Rockefeller Foundation, and it also contravened a defined order made by the Minister. The Board had approved Dr. A. Buckley's temporary appointment, until the vacancy could be permanently filled. Mr. Lynch expressed frustration that the County Council had overridden that decision. He questioned what right the Council had to interfere in the business of the Board. The Chairman referred to the relevant Act of Parliament regarding the appointment of the County Medical Officer of Health and Tuberculosis Officer, noting that it did not provide for the appointment of assistant medical officers. The County Council held certain views on the matter, and a conference with the Department had been arranged to address the issue. The Ministry had asked why such a conference was being called, and the County Council had

formally responded to that inquiry. Mr. Lynch insisted that the Board should have the autonomy to carry out its responsibilities without interference from another authority. The Board had taken actions and made appointments in the interest of public health, only to have them overturned by the County Council. He expressed uncertainty over whether their work could be lawfully undermined in such a way by another public body.

The Chairman responded that some members of the County Council did not accept that the Board of Health had a mandatory duty to establish the necessary structures to make such appointments. The Secretary then highlighted the seriousness of the situation. He stated that Dr. Condy had been appointed County Medical Officer of Health and Tuberculosis Officer under the Act of 1925. That Act provided for a single County Medical Officer of Public Health, who would also serve as the chief tuberculosis officer. Dr. Condy, as such, was a servant of the County Council, and the Board of Health had no authority over him. Although he reported to the Board, he remained an employee of the Council. Mr. Lynch asked whether Dr. Condy was paid by the County Council, to which the Secretary confirmed that he was—along with the three assistant medical officers. Mr. Lynch then questioned what jurisdiction the Board had over these officials. The Secretary clarified that while the Board had no jurisdiction over the County Medical Officer of Health, it did have authority over half of the duties performed by the assistant medical officers—specifically those duties related to child welfare, school health, and public health services. Mr. Lynch asked if a conference with the Department was indeed planned to address the matter. The Chairman confirmed that it was, and expressed the belief that the situation would remain unresolved until such a conference took place. No action was taken on the issue pending the outcome of the conference.[112]

In September 1930, at a special meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, held after the County Council had adjourned for lunch, Mr. W. J. Broderick, chairman, presided.

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[112] *Southern Star 16/8/1930*

The acting secretary, Mr. O'Callaghan, read a letter from the Minister for Local Government requesting that the Board apply to the Local Appointments Commissioners to recommend candidates for the two existing vacancies for assistant county tuberculosis medical officers of health in the county. The chairman explained the attitude of the County Council regarding the matter and stated that he was drafting a letter to submit to the Minister. The letter would include suggestions about the necessity for a conference between the medical officers of health, the County Board of Health, and the County Council to address the issue at hand during that period in time. This course of action was approved.[113]

By early October, a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held, with Mr. R. Daly presiding. Mr. C. Buckley stated that, within the previous few days, one of their officials, Mr. James P. Murphy, had passed away. Mr. Murphy had, for a number of years, been connected with the Cork Rural District Council and had continued with the new Board since its establishment. Mr. Buckley described him as a very decent man, and one of the finest types he had ever encountered. He deeply regretted the occasion and proposed that the sympathy of the Committee be extended to Mr. Murphy's widow and family. Mr. Corry, seconding the motion, stated that the late Mr. Murphy was one of the most painstaking and capable officials the Board had. Mr. Crowley also associated himself with the resolution, as did the Secretary, Mr. D. Egan, and Mr. J. Barry on behalf of the officials. In declaring the motion passed, the Chairman described Mr. Murphy as a very good official and a thoroughly decent man. The Engineer, Mr. B. O'Flynn, submitted a memorial from residents of Myrtleville, requesting that the existing well be sunk a few feet deeper. Mr. O'Flynn reported that the cost of sinking the pump by ten feet, lining it with concrete, and installing a concrete platform would be £88. This, he stated, would provide an ample water supply. Mr. Crowley gave notice of a motion to allocate the necessary funds.

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[113] *Cork Examiner 26/9/1930*

Regarding the topic of Bandon's water supply, the Engineer reported that the contract with the Bandon Milling Company required them to pump 62,500 gallons per day for an annual fee of £200. This quantity was based on an average daily consumption of 20 gallons per person. Any additional pumping was to be paid at a rate of 1½d per unit. For the nine months ending 30 September, the total volume pumped amounted to 35,968,000 gallons—equivalent to 42 gallons per person per day—with the excess pumping cost totalling £244 5s 2d. The Engineer revised the water rentals, which he stated had been exceedingly low. The original total rent of £361 16s had been increased to £601 17s, an increase of £240 1s. The revised rates were based on the following: 1s 6d in the pound, with a minimum charge of 20s; an additional 30s for licensed premises; 20s extra for motor garages; and 10s extra for garden taps. Mr. Crowley gave notice that he would move for the adoption of the Engineer's report. The Engineer further reported that the sole water supply to Rathcoursey village was a spring located on the Strand, which was submerged at each tide. The approach to the spring was difficult. However, the supply was ample, and if the spring could be traced to its source, a very economical scheme could be implemented. On the proposal of Mr. Carey, it was agreed to instruct the Engineer to trace the spring and to submit a further report. Mr. Crowley reminded the Committee that a proposal to provide an adequate water supply for Minane Bridge had been rejected the previous year. However, the local population had since approached him to raise the matter again. Under the prevailing arrangement, residents were sometimes obliged to carry water from as far as three-quarters of a mile away. He had also received a request from the residents of Goggin's Hill, Ballinhassig, to secure a water supply for their area. Mr. Crowley proposed that the Engineer be requested to prepare reports on both matters for the next meeting. This was agreed to.[114]

A few days later, as documented by the '*Evening Echo*' newspaper, a conference took place in the Council Chamber of the Courthouse to discuss the organisation of public health

[114] *Cork Examiner 7/10/1930*

services in County Cork. The meeting was attended by Dr. J. D. McCormack, Medical Inspector from the Local Government Department, along with members of the Cork County Council and the Cork County Board of Health. Mr. W. J. Broderick, Chairman of both bodies, presided over the proceedings. Among those present were several councillors, members of the board, Dr. Condy (County Medical Officer of Health), Dr. J. O'Connor (representing the County Medical Officers Association), Mr. E. Callanan (Secretary to the Council and Board), and Mr. H. Exham (Law Agent). Before the formal session began, the Chairman and attending members held a private consultation with Dr. Condy and Mr. Callanan. They reviewed relevant documentation and correspondence with the Department, previous decisions by the County Council, and medical reports concerning the health scheme. The discussion revealed differing opinions about the future of the public health administration in the county, particularly concerning the role of assistant medical officers.

One of the central issues discussed was whether or not to maintain the appointment of three assistant county medical officers, or to rely instead on the 72 existing dispensary medical doctors to assist the County Medical Officer. Some members, including Mr. Corry and Mr. C. J. McCarthy, argued in favour of incorporating the dispensary doctors into the system. The Chairman summarised the choice as being between that of continuing the prevailing arrangement with designated assistant officers, or restructuring the system by assigning the duties to dispensary doctors, which would involve eliminating the assistant officer posts. Mr. Corry formally proposed, with Mr. McCarthy seconding, that the assistant positions not be filled and that the dispensary doctors take over their responsibilities. In response, Mr. J. Barry, supported by Mr. J. Daly, offered a counter-proposal. This amendment recommended that the County Board of Health request the Department to fill the two vacant assistant medical officer positions through the Local Appointments Commission. They proposed this course of action only if the board was confident that cooperation between dispensary doctors and the existing tuberculosis and health services could be improved. Opponents of the Corry motion,

including Mr. Bradley and Mr. R. Daly, warned that abandoning the assistant posts could result in the loss of both Government and Rockefeller Foundation grants, which were contingent on those specific appointments. Mr. Corry disputed this interpretation, insisting the grants would remain intact.

To clarify the matter, Dr. McCormack informed the conference that the Department had clearly instructed him to state that the grants would be withdrawn if the assistant county medical officer positions were not maintained. The matter was put to a vote. The amendment, supporting the continuation of the assistant medical officers, was carried by a vote of 15 to 4, and adopted as the final decision. Following the vote, the conference turned its attention to issues relating to patient care. Several members raised concerns about insured patients, who were not receiving adequate nourishment, such as milk and eggs, or sufficient medical attention at home. These problems were attributed to poor coordination among different branches of the health service.

Dr. McCormack responded by stating that many of these difficulties resulted from inconsistent interpretations of existing regulations. He had invited Dr. O'Connor to the meeting to explore potential improvements and suggested forming a working group that would include himself, Dr. Condy, and Dr. O'Connor. The group would be tasked with resolving practical issues and establishing uniform procedures for managing the public health and tuberculosis services. The Chairman and members expressed their approval of this proposal. Dr. O'Connor added that one of the most pressing priorities should be the expansion and improvement of the nutritional support provided to patients in the county.[115]

At the October full meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, chaired by Mr. W. J. Broderick, a deputation appeared before the Board to request approval of a resolution passed by the West Cork Committee regarding the provision

[115] *Evening Echo 13/10/1930*

of a suitable water supply for Drimoleague. The deputation included Rev. J. Coakley, P.P.; Rev. M. Atkin, Rector; Dr. J. J. Fuller; Mr. A. O'Donovan, M.C.C.; and Mr. B. J. Cotter. Rev. Coakley explained that a resolution concerning the water scheme had originally been passed four years earlier but had not reached the full Board at the time. He admitted to having delayed it, believing the scheme was overly complex and costly. He had hoped that the Dáil would introduce legislation standardising area charges for such schemes, but this had not materialised. The prevailing proposal, he said, was far simpler and significantly less expensive. The only outstanding issue was the determination of the area charge. The West Cork Committee had recently passed a resolution on this point, which they now sought to have ratified by the Board as the fairest approach. In response to queries, Mr. James O'Mahony, Assistant Secretary to the West Cork Committee, outlined the financial details of the scheme. The total cost was £1,900, to be financed by a 25-year loan at 5.5% interest. Annual repayment of the principal would amount to £7, interest payments would total £109 5s, and an additional £40 would be allocated to revenue, making the overall yearly cost £165 5s. The Committee proposed a charge of 2d in the pound on the Skibbereen rural district, generating £92 4s, and 1d in the pound on the Drimoleague rural district, yielding £72 15s. Mr. O'Donovan moved, and Mr. Kelly seconded, the adoption of the West Cork Committee's recommendation, which was duly approved. The Board also resolved to endorse the recommendations made at the recent public health services conference. Dr. McCormack, who had chaired the conference, was asked by the Chairman whether he considered the proposals reasonable. He confirmed that he did and stated he would report on them to the Minister after further consultations with Dr. O'Connor and Dr. Condy. Additionally, the Board had approved a recommendation from the Appointments Commissioners regarding the hiring of Miss T. Cullen Connell of Glasgow as a public health nurse for Cork County.[116]

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[116] *Southern Star 18/9/1930*

At a November 1930 meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, Mr. R. Daly, Vice-Chairman, presided. Those present included Messrs. E. Carey, T.D.; M. Buckley; C. Buckley; P. Crowley (Bandon); J. Donovan; M. Corry, T.D.; and E. Aherne. Before the official business commenced, Mr. Crowley proposed that the Board extend its condolences to the family of the late Pipe-Major Neilus Cronin, who had passed away in Switzerland. He described Cronin as a distinguished musician whose death represented a significant loss to Cork and to Ireland as a whole. Mr. C. Buckley seconded the motion, which was then passed in silence. Mr. Crowley then proposed, with Mr. C. Buckley seconding, that the salary of Mr. Prior, Dairy Inspector in Kinsale, be increased from £55 to £95 per annum. He argued that Mr. Prior had a large and challenging district to cover and had served diligently for many years. In response to a question from Mr. Corry, the Secretary noted that a similar position in Midleton carried a salary of only £30 per year. However, the Chairman expressed concern about increasing salaries at a time when the economy was struggling, citing falling prices for agricultural products and national financial hardship. He acknowledged Mr. Prior's experience but moved an amendment to defer the application for 12 months. Mr. Corry seconded this amendment. When put to a vote, the amendment was defeated, with only the Chairman and Mr. Corry voting in favour. The majority, including Messrs. Aherne, C. Buckley, M. Buckley, Crowley, Carey, and Donovan, voted against. Mr. Donovan then suggested a smaller increase of £20, while Mr. Corry proposed £10. After discussion, the Committee agreed to grant a £20 annual raise. Next, Mr. C. Buckley proposed, and Mr. Crowley seconded, that the salary of William Fitton, the curator of the Ballincollig waterworks, be increased to £2 10s. per week, matching that of his predecessor. The Secretary confirmed that Mr. Fitton had ten years of service, also handled water rent collections, and had maintained a strong collection record. Mr. Corry, supported by the Chairman, moved an amendment opposing any increase, arguing that the predecessor's salary was set in pre-war conditions and that the present circumstances did not justify matching it. He also noted that Mr. Fitton received housing from the Board. The motion was rejected, with Messrs. C.

Buckley, Carey, and Crowley voting in favour, while Messrs. Aherne, M. Buckley, Corry, Donovan, and the Chairman voted against it. Mr. Crowley then proposed, with Mr. C. Buckley seconding, an increase in the salary of Timothy Murphy, water curator at Crosshaven, from £2 5s. to £3 per week. He pointed out that Mr. Murphy worked seven days a week, often 12 to 14 hours a day, for nine months of the year. Mr. Corry moved, and Mr. Donovan seconded, an amendment rejecting the increase. The motion was again defeated, with only the proposer and seconder supporting it and the rest of the Committee voting against. Finally, several motions submitted by Mr. Crowley regarding proposed water supplies at Miriane Bridge (Bandon), Myrtleville, and Goggin's Hill (Ballinhassig) were referred to Dr. Condy, the County Medical Officer of Health, for assessment and reporting on their feasibility.[117]

During December 1930, a special meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the Washington St. courthouse, Cork City. Captain Collins initially presided as Vice-Chairman, and Mr. W. J. Broderick later took over as Chairman. The County Secretary explained that the meeting had been convened to receive proposals from the western area of the county regarding water and sewerage schemes. These projects were to be funded partially through government grants and partially via local rates. If approved, applications would be submitted to the Ministry for an allocation from a £300,000 loan designated for that of unemployment relief. Schemes for the northern and southern areas had already been submitted to the Ministry, each accompanied by explanatory statements. It was subsequently the responsibility of the western representatives to present their proposed works.

Mr. Hinchin inquired about which specific schemes had already been sent to the Ministry. The County Secretary responded that schemes had been submitted for Newmarket (£9,500), Charleville (£12,000), Millstreet (£1,500), Liscarroll (£500), Knocknagree (£500), Blarney (£4,250), Douglas (£400), Minane Bridge (£257), and Myrtleville

[117] *Southern Star 8/11/1930*

(£88), each with explanatory documentation outlining the scope of work, and anticipated employment benefits. A letter from the Ministry for Local Government and Public Health was read at the meeting. It stated to those present that no specific allocations could yet be made to any district, until the unemployment situation had been fully assessed. Local authorities were asked to provide evidence of registered unemployed individuals in each district, along with details on the amount of home assistance then being provided by the Boards of Health and Public Assistance. If any essential public health works, such as water or sewerage schemes, were being considered to generate employment, the Ministry would give such proposals full consideration. Although these works were typically to be funded locally, contributions from national relief funds could be considered if justified by the unemployment conditions. However, local authorities would still be expected to cover the majority of the costs, potentially through local loans. If no public health projects were planned, it was suggested that other employment-generating works could be submitted instead.

The western area representatives proceeded to outline the following proposed schemes for their submission to the relevant Department: Bantry pier improvements (£1,200), Ballydehob water supply (£1,600), Drimoleague water supply (£1,900), and Dunmanway sewerage improvements (£150). Additional proposals included the Boherbuoy health service (£1,000), water supply schemes for Ballyclough (£500), Glantane (£300), Banteer (£1,500), and Ballingeary (£2,500), as well as sewerage works for Kanturk (£500). It was also decided to incorporate necessary roadworks, wall repairs, and other related infrastructure into the overall plans. Furthermore, eight tenders were received for the construction of thirty-nine houses under the Charleville housing scheme. The lowest bid, submitted by Seán Moylan, based in Kiskeam, at £10,176, was accepted. The contractor confirmed that Irish-manufactured slates would be used for the roofing work.[118]

[118] *Cork Examiner 17/12/1930*

Artistic depiction of a freshly constructed Board of Health cottage.

The old workhouse in the town of Youghal,
County Cork.
(Source: workhouses.org.uk)

THE NEW POLITICS OF PUBLIC SERVICES, 1931-1932

During the Spring of the new year of 1931, a meeting of the North Cork Board of Assistance and the Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the County Home in Mallow. Mr. J. M. O'Connor chaired the meeting, with several members in attendance, including Messrs. J. Daly, T.D.; John Barrett; B. W. Brasier; James S. Russell; P. Crowley (Banteer); N. J. Barry; John Barry; Maurice Murphy; Jerh. Buckley; and D. Hinchin. The meeting then addressed tenders for coal supplies—50 tons for Kanturk County Hospital and 25 tons for Fermoy County Hospital. Three contractors had submitted offers for each institution. For Kanturk, W. R. Oliver & Co. of Buttevant quoted 37s. 1d. per ton for Point of Ayr coal; Suttons of South Mall, Cork, offered Lancashire coal at 38s. 11d. per ton; and Tedcastle McCormick & Co. of Lapp's Quay quoted £2 0s. 6d. for Whitehaven coal. For Fermoy Hospital, the same firms tendered similar prices: Olivers at 36s. 11d., Suttons at 38s. 7d., and Tedcastle McCormick at 39s. per ton.

During discussion, the Assistant Secretary noted that Kanturk Hospital had previously received similar coal from Olivers, which had been deemed inferior and subsequently replaced. Following this, the Board decided to accept the tenders from Suttons for both hospitals. The Board also approved the Local Appointments Commission's recommendation to appoint Miss Kate Twomey of Woodfield, Co. Cork, as a trained nurse for Mallow District Hospital. Regarding a resolution passed at a previous meeting, Mr. Crowley inquired about the Ministry's response concerning the appointment of Dr. C. J. Linehan as anaesthetist to Kanturk District Hospital. The Assistant Secretary confirmed that no reply had been received. Mr. Crowley proposed that the Board's earlier decision be implemented with immediate effect, arguing that Dr. Linehan, as the nearest medical officer to the institution, was entitled to be called upon when anaesthetic services were required. Mr. Brasier seconded the motion. Mr. Crowley asserted that the Board's directive was not being followed, as Dr. Linehan had not yet been engaged.

The Chairman replied that institutional regulations were in place, regulations to which the matron was adhering. He added that the standing rule required the nearest available practitioner to be called in for administering anaesthesia.[119]

A couple of weeks later, the '*Southern Star*' reported that a full meeting of Cork County Council discussed the matter of how the Council gave its approval to the proposals submitted by the Cork County Board of Health for raising loans from the Commissioners of Public Works to finance various water supply and sewerage schemes. The total value of the proposed works amounted to £63,028. These included £1,010 for the Kingswilliamstown water supply; £2,500 for Liscarroll water supply; £1,200 for Skehanagh water supply; £1,000 for Cahirmee and Ballyellis water supply; and £2,302 for various sewerage extensions. Additional allocations included £1,645 for improvements to Bandon sewerage and water works; £1,700 for Killeagh water supply; £1,000 for the extension of the Midleton-Ballinacurra water supply; £2,600 for the Ballydehob water supply; £7,000 for the construction of a hospital at Castletownbere; and £2,500 for improvements to the County Home in Clonakilty. Further funding was allocated for £2,500 to provide hospital accommodation at Dunmanway; £1,700 for improvements to the Carrigtwohill water supply; £1,050 for the Blarney village water supply; £2,500 for the Ballingeary water supply; £1,900 for the Drimoleague water supply; and £11,000 for the Charleville water supply. In addition, £3,247 10s. was approved for improvements to Millstreet sewerage; £1,006 for the Liscarroll sewerage system; £1,000 for the Boherbue sewerage; and £1,600 for the Banteer water supply and sewerage system. In connection with the £1 deposit required from contractors submitting tenders, Mr. C. J. McCarthy proposed, and Mr. Harrington seconded, that deposits be refunded to those who had tendered on the day of the tender meeting. However, Mr. O'Donoghue proposed an amendment that the deposit should not be refunded until seven days had passed following the meeting. Upon division, seven members voted in favour of the amendment and ten against. The Chairman, Mr. J. M. O'Connor, declared the

[119] *Cork Examiner 3/3/1931*

amendment carried. Following a suggestion by Mr. Meane, it was agreed that in future no tender would be accepted unless accompanied by the £1 deposit. On the motion of Mr. T. O'Sullivan, the County Surveyor was instructed to expedite a scheme for the steam-rolling of the road from Glengariff to Adrigole. The County Surveyor confirmed that work on this scheme had already commenced.[120]

In April, Mr. W. J. Broderick, Chairman, presided over a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health held in the County Council Chamber, Washington St. Courthouse, Cork city centre. Regarding the West Cork Committee of Public Health, the Chairman instructed the Secretary, Mr. O'Mahony, to continue advertising the Committee's meetings. He further noted that if the Committee failed to conduct its business, such matters would be undertaken by the County Board of Health. The meeting then addressed the unresolved items from the West Cork Committee's previous meeting in Clonakilty. These included a letter from the Minister for Local Government and Public Health concerning the vaccination of the children of a man named John Buckley of Shinagh. The Minister requested an explanation for the Committee's decision to adjourn legal proceedings. Mr. O'Mahony reported that the West Cork Board had refused to act on the matter and instead referred it to the County Board. Buckley had previously been prosecuted and fined for failing to comply with the Vaccination Act. Mr. O'Donovan proposed a one-month adjournment to allow him time to speak with Buckley. Mr. Hurley suggested dropping the matter altogether. Ultimately, it was agreed to adjourn for a month. The Engineer to the West Cork Committee reported that Major Chavasse of the local Water Committee had repeatedly noted reduced water pressure in village pipes, attributed to corrosion in the main. The Engineer requested permission to cut a section of the pipe for inspection. He also noted that the local caretaker appeared unaware that routine inspections of taps and fittings were part of his duties. Mr. O'Mahony confirmed this misunderstanding, although the caretaker had accepted the position under the same terms as others. The Secretary

[120] *Southern Star 14/3/1931*

recommended issuing the caretaker with a copy of the standard duty list, emphasising no distinction should be made. The Secretary read from the West Cork Committee minutes a resolution proposed by Mr. D. O'Callaghan and seconded by Mr. C. J. Bryan, requesting a guarantee from the County Board of Health not to interfere with the Committee's decisions. Without such a guarantee, the Committee stated it would not act on matters where its decisions might be overturned. Six members supported the motion, while four opposed. Captain Collins moved that no action be taken in response. Mr. Hinchin seconded, saying, "We won't give them any guarantee." Mr. R. Daly added humorously, "Cease function, cease fire." Mr. Walsh acknowledged the Committee's grievance in a previous matter, though the Chairman and others disagreed. Mr. Hinchin noted that the Committee, like its North Cork counterpart, was simply a sub-committee of the County Board of Health. Mr. Hurley proposed stripping the West Cork Board of its power to allocate labourers' cottages, but the Secretary advised that prior notice of motion would be required.

Regarding a rent collector's poundage, the Minister for Local Government and Public Health stated that no poundage would be paid to former rent collector Mr. Gleeson until all outstanding rents had been credited to the Board. Mr. R. Daly queried whether the sureties would now be liable for the £127. The Secretary responded in the negative. Mr. Egan (Secretary of the South Cork Board) reported that he had written twice to the sureties without receiving a reply. The Chairman expressed sympathy for the sureties' situation. The Secretary suggested Mr. Exham write again to the sureties, and if they offered a reasonable settlement of Gleeson's deficit, the Board could consider accepting it. One surety had claimed not to be a tenant on the relevant lands. Mr. Daly believed this to be true. Mr. Egan clarified that the Southern Committee had approved the sureties, though the Chairman stated that the matter had not come before the County Board. The Board directed Mr. Exham to proceed with the recommended correspondence.

Four tenders were received for a supplementary water supply for Ballycotton. On the motion of Mr. R. Daly, seconded by the Chairman, the tender of Mr. John Barrett, Morrison's Island, Cork, amounting to £165 10s—the lowest—was accepted. Mr. R. Daly reported that a contract for the Knockgriffin water supply had been issued approximately a year prior. However, a dispute involving the contractor's brother had caused delays, though the matter had since been settled in court. The local community was now eager for the work to proceed. Half of the funding was to be provided by the Land Trust. The matter was referred to Mr. O'Flynn, B.E., who stated that he had prepared the plans and would forward them to the Department once the necessary bonds were signed, allowing work to commence. The County Board of Health also examined the matter of slaughter house bye-laws, following the presentation of reports by the County Medical Officer for Health.[121]

Mr W. J. Broderick, Chairman, once again presided over a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health during May 1931. A deputation representing the ratepayers of the Charleville, Milltown, Springfort, and Ardskeagh electoral divisions, in the rural district of Charleville, attended the meeting to express concerns about the water supply scheme at that time under construction in Charleville. The deputation comprised Messrs McAuliffe, Crowley, Hedigan, O'Regan, and Madigan. Mr McAuliffe, acting as spokesman, stated that the rural ratepayers had not been consulted regarding the cost of constructing or maintaining the water scheme. He warned that they feared being burdened with a significant financial obligation on their rates indefinitely. Despite national relief granted to agricultural ratepayers through additional funding, Charleville rural ratepayers were not in a better position to shoulder further taxation. He claimed that had the ratepayers been consulted earlier, they would have withheld their consent. "We are willing, at this stage," Mr McAuliffe said, "to accept the cost of erection, even though it imposes an additional rate of 1½d in the pound (£) upon us. However, we strongly object to bearing the ongoing annual maintenance costs, which we estimate to be approximately

[121] *Cork Examiner 14/4/1931*

£500 or around 6½d in the pound on the Poor Law Valuation." He insisted that the maintenance burden should fall on the residents of Charleville town, who would be the primary beneficiaries of the water scheme. He argued that rural ratepayers would receive no benefit—neither direct nor indirect—and thus should not be expected to pay.

Mr Cahill, representing other interests, voiced agreement with Mr McAuliffe and clarified that his objections also related to the cost of maintenance. The scheme, he noted, was already in the hands of the contractor and nearing completion. He estimated the maintenance cost at £500—nearly double the figure of £250–£300 per annum estimated by the Engineer, Mr Coughlan. Mr Cahill provided a breakdown of anticipated costs:

- One technician with knowledge of electric motors, at £3 per week
- A second assistant, eventually required due to the demanding nature of the work, at £1 per week
- Electricity costs, based on 10,000 units per quarter, estimated at £4 per week
- £50 for depreciation and £30 for National Health Insurance contributions.

He proposed halting the installation of the pumping machinery temporarily, making deductions from the contract, and deferring the scheme until the following year after a new County Council was elected.

Mr R. Daly queried whether the work was still ongoing, and Mr Cahill replied affirmatively. He also suggested seeking an additional government grant of approximately £600 and encouraging Charleville residents to contribute another £1,000, which would bring the total funding to £8,000 and potentially eliminate maintenance costs for rural ratepayers. The Engineer confirmed that the Board was already committed to a distribution scheme in Charleville, based on a 109,000-gallon storage tank. Mr O'Regan added his objection, stating that the rural ratepayers had never been consulted. Mr Hinchin remarked that Mr Daly, T.D., had previously offered to meet residents at the chapel gate to

discuss the issue. Mr R. Kelly stated that the Charleville scheme was one of the first matters addressed at his initial Board meeting. Initially estimated at £13,000, it had been successfully reduced to £3,000 following efforts by Mr J. Daly. During that entire process, no deputation had come from Charleville, and the Board was surprised at the community's prior silence. Mr O'Regan reiterated that it was unfair to impose charges on those who would not benefit and who already faced high valuations. The Chairman noted that the scheme had been discussed in the press on at least three occasions, and it had always been made clear that Charleville residents would not be committed to the housing or water supply schemes without their consent. Mr J. Daly added, "I was tongue-tied from shouting that."

Captain Collins exclaimed, "Have we nothing else to do but to come here and listen to deputations from Charleville who want to capsize the entire thing?" The Chairman interjected, "One moment, Skipper. These gentlemen did not appreciate what was being done for them." Captain Collins replied, "Let them go to the County Council." The Chairman stated, "Even now, I am prepared to do what I possibly can for them, but we are already committed to the contracts, and we cannot reverse them."

Mr McAuliffe concluded that those who stood to gain the most from the scheme should bear the majority of the maintenance costs, not the already overburdened, in his view, rural ratepayers.[122]

The following month, another full meeting of the County Board of Health took place, with several pertinent issues discussed. The Board revisited the issue of a proposed £1,950 loan for extending the Rochestown water supply. The County Council had previously referred the matter back for further consideration, specifically requesting that the Cork Rural District be designated as the area of charge rather than the Douglas Dispensary District, as originally proposed. Mr D. Hinchin moved a motion to rescind the earlier resolution (dated 9 February 1931) and instead designate the former

[122] *Evening Echo 11/5/1931*

Cork Rural District as the liable area. Capt. Collins seconded the motion. In support, solicitor Mr J. J. McCabe, representing ratepayers in the Rochestown and Douglas districts, was in attendance. The Chairman clarified that the Department had directed this change, making the new proposal procedurally in order. However, Mr R. Daly raised objections, arguing it was unfair to place the burden across the entire rural district. He believed it ought to remain a more localised dispensary-level charge and signalled his intention to bring a rescinding motion in future. Despite this, the motion was adopted. The Board received notification from the Appointment Commissioners that Miss Mary Anne Colohan, of Brackernagh Cottage, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway, had been recommended for the position of Public Health Nurse for County Cork. As no suitable applicant with adequate Irish language skills had been found, the recommendation was made in accordance with the Local Offices and Employments (Gaeltacht) Order, 1928. The Board approved both the recommendation and the appointment.

A deputation of three ratepayers from the Cloyne district attended the meeting to object to an increase in water rents associated with the local supply. They explained that the rent hike had been made by notice of motion, but no prior notice had reached the affected households. While seeking to settle the matter, they called for more reasonable charges. Engineer Mr J. O'Flynn, explained that new water rates had been introduced after some residents had refused to pay, resulting in supply cut-offs. The new rates were necessary to recoup arrears. Mr Brasier met with the deputation during the meeting and helped to negotiate a compromise. It was agreed that:

- Business premises would pay 75% of the full water rate
- Household users would pay 50%
- Outstanding arrears would be reduced and cleared off under these revised terms.

The Board adopted this arrangement.

The Board received approval from the Department of Local Government and Public Health for the Glengarriff Water Supply Scheme, having reviewed the plans and specifications submitted. In regard to the Charleville Water Supply Scheme, correspondence confirmed that the Department had examined the Engineer's report and accompanying documentation. They had no objections to the work proceeding as planned.

The Secretary informed the Board that under prevailing legislation, all dance hall licence applications must be considered by the District Court. He recommended that prior to court hearings, all applications—including building plans and terms—should first be referred to the County Council for inspection. This would allow assessment by the County Surveyor or Deputy Surveyors to ensure suitability and safety. In response to a question from the Chairman, the Secretary confirmed that such inspection should take place before the buildings were constructed, noting the importance of ensuring that all venues intended for dancing met minimum safety standards. He drew attention to a recent case in Drumcollogher, where a cinema lit with paraffin oil had led to a fire. He also referenced standards in Cork City, where the City Engineer rigorously inspected dance halls and denied approval to any structures deemed unsuitable. As a safeguard, he suggested that the Board write to District Court clerks requesting that all dance hall applications be forwarded to the Board in advance, and that the County Surveyor be given authority to inspect premises prior to judicial approval. The Law Agent advised that, while decisions on licences remained a matter for the District Justices, both the Board of Health and County Council were entitled to prior notice of such cases. He supported the Secretary's proposal that clerks of the District Court be asked to provide this information.[123]

At the July 1931 meeting of the West Cork Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, an interesting development occurred. Mr T. Sheehy, T.D., of Skibbereen, was unanimously elected Chairman for the coming year. The motion for his election was proposed by Labour's Mr T.J.

[123] *Cork Examiner 9/6/1931*

Murphy, T.D., who noted that Mr Sheehy had served on public boards in the county for a great many years. He had been deeply involved in numerous initiatives aimed at advancing the welfare of both the people and the nation. Mr Murphy expressed confidence that the people of West Cork would welcome the appointment of such a respected and long-serving figure to the leadership of the Committee. Mr C. J. Bryan seconded the motion. Upon his election, Mr Sheehy conveyed his deep appreciation for the honour bestowed upon him. Reflecting on his long-standing involvement with Co. Cork's public bodies, he remarked that he had worked with Cork County Council since its establishment over 30 years earlier, and had served on the Board of Health since its inception. Throughout that time, he had found his colleagues to be exceptional representatives of Irish public service. From the introduction of the Local Government Act onward, they had consistently shown strong commitment to ensuring that County Cork remained a leader in sound governance and financial prudence. He expressed sincere thanks to the Committee for their recognition and support. The meeting also saw the unanimous election of Mr W. J. Roycroft as Vice-Chairman. His nomination was proposed by Mr C. J. Bryan and seconded by the newly elected Chairman.[124]

As documented by the '*Evening Echo*' newspaper, at the commencement of September 1931, a special meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held to consider the County Council's recommendation that Mr Joseph F. Wrenne be appointed as Secretary to the Board. During the proceedings, Captain Collins noted that, on a previous occasion, the Board had spent an entire day deliberating the matter, only to appoint Mr Owen Callanan as temporary secretary. He pointed out that, before any permanent decision could be made, the previous resolution regarding Mr Callanan's temporary role would have to be rescinded. The Chairman clarified that Mr Callanan would continue to serve in a temporary capacity for the time being. The immediate matter for consideration was the County Council's recommendation to appoint Mr Wrenne as the permanent

[124] *Cork Examiner 29/7/1931*

Secretary of the Board. A motion proposing Mr Wrenne's appointment was put forward by Mr John Daly and seconded by Mr M. Walsh. The resolution was unanimously adopted, confirming Mr Joseph F. Wrenne as the new permanent Secretary to the Cork County Board of Health.[125]

A few days later, a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the Courthouse, Cork city centre, with Mr T. Corcoran, M.C.C., presiding. Topics such as sewerage, maintenance works and water schemes were discussed. Discussing the Crab Lane National Schools, the Engineer reported sewerage issues due to the site's low elevation. An electric motor was suggested as the most viable solution. A copy of the report was to be forwarded to the school manager. Additionally, in reference to the Whitegate Water Supply, an application to extend the water supply to two ex-servicemen's houses was approved, conditional on the tenants paying £1 annually in rent. The committee approved repairs to the Kilbrittain water storage tank at a cost of £16 10s, and £31 was allocated to repair the Crosshaven pumping plant.

The Engineer presented an estimate of £648 for enclosing the proposed extension to the Douglas Burial Ground, noting the wall would reach 10 feet in height in certain places. The extension would cover 1½ acres. A legal document detailing the land conveyance was read aloud. The cost of the land was confirmed at £326, including £220 to the occupier, £60 to the owner, and the balance for legal expenses. Some members, particularly Mr Corry and Mr Carey, expressed concern about the high cost, arguing that the land was overpriced and suggesting alternative sites should be considered. However, the Secretary clarified that the Board had already proceeded with arbitration, signed and sealed the necessary documentation, and was legally bound to the acquisition. The minutes from previous meetings confirmed that the arbitration process had been formally authorised and that Senator Linehan had acted as valuer. The Chairman reiterated that the extension was essential due to overcrowding in the existing graveyard and that this was the

[125] *Evening Echo 3/9/1931*

only suitable site. The Engineer added that the 600 graves on the plot would yield approximately £3 each, effectively covering the cost. He proposed a loan of £1,000 to cover expenses.

S.S.O. Magner of Youghal No. 1 Rural District reported on a goat carcass which had washed ashore at Summerfield. Responsibility for the burial fell to Youghal Urban District Council, as owners of the strand. However, the Town Clerk refused action, prompting Magner to bury the animal at his own initiative and at a cost of 5s. The committee agreed to bill the Urban Council for this amount. Dealing with cottage repairs, high tender costs, ranging between £25 and £28, for cottage repairs prompted questions. The Engineer attributed these to poor original construction methods—mud plaster instead of cement—which led to damage from rain. Reports also noted bare walls and degraded floors. Local residents Mr Morrogh and Mr Simpson raised concerns over irregular water supply in Crosshaven, citing long periods without water and poor maintenance. It was reported that the caretaker had been collecting money in church while neglecting duties. The Engineer confirmed that actions had already been approved to improve the pumping system and agreed to inspect the situation personally.

The Committee also discussed a letter from the Local Government Department regarding the tenancy of labourers' cottages. There was strong reaction to reports that individuals were collecting 1 shilling per person from tenants, allegedly under the pretence of protecting them from rent increases. Members unanimously denied any intention to raise rents. Mr Buckley criticised some tenants for falling significantly into arrears, while the Chairman stressed that the board remained committed to supporting 'bona fide' agricultural labourers, even if the cottages represented a financial loss to ratepayers. It was agreed to send the minutes to the Department, detailing actions taken to ensure appropriate tenancy and fair rents.

Several motions were also passed for infrastructure improvements:

- A new £600 water pipe to be installed at Bandon (Mr Crowley's motion).
- A well at Knocknagore, Crosshaven costing £180.
- Extension of the Midleton water supply from Carrigshane to Cahermore, approved at £220 (Mr Carey's motion).
- Lighting main extension on Castle Road, Blackrock, at £60, plus four new lamps (Mr Buckley).
- New water main for Carrigtwohill to replace corroded pipes, approved at £1,000 (Mr Daly and Mr Corry).

The value of old pipes was estimated at £300, which Mr Corry suggested be credited to the South Cork area. Although passed by the Committee, the Chairman expressed doubt the Local Government Department would accept this allocation as it was irregular.[126]

In October 1931, an opinion piece featured in the pages of the '*Cork Examiner*.' At the last meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, it was noted that a request was put forward that some steps should be taken to prevent flooding at the western end of the Victoria Road. The gentleman who appeared before the Board in connection with the matter stated that the residents of Kingston Avenue and Rosefield Terrace would soon have been unable to get to or from their houses at all, and that on many occasions they had been completely marooned. According to the writer's assertions, any person who had frequently passed along the Victoria Road would readily have endorsed these statements. The writer believed there was no question but that the residents of this particular district had very genuine grounds for complaint. In the writer's view, it was no mean tribute to their patience that a greater outcry had not been raised before then. There were other places admittedly in Cork that were liable to flood, but the writer claimed this usually happened only under abnormal weather conditions, such as an unusually high Spring tide coinciding with heavy rains and Easterly winds. However, the writer argued that in the case of the city end of the Victoria Road, even a moderate shower of rain was liable to render it impassable for pedestrians. As a result of this request, the County Board of Health made an

[126] *Cork Examiner 8/9/1931*

order directing the County Surveyor to meet the City Engineer and report on the condition of the place. It was the writer's hope that there would be no delay in having this matter attended to—particularly with winter approaching—when this constant flooding would have become, in the writer's view, a serious hardship for the residents, beyond mere inconvenience. Some months before, on the motion of the senior member for the Macroom district of the County Council, it had been decided to erect public lavatory accommodation at Blackrock. As far as could be ascertained —according to the writer—nothing had yet been done to put this important decision into effect.

The writer asserted that city people, in large crowds, were wont to patronise the Blackrock district on Sundays and holidays, as being the most accessible spot where sea air might be enjoyed. Considering the large number of people who availed of these amenities, the writer believed it was a sad reflection on the administration of a modern Christian country that there was no sanitary accommodation of any kind available. In fact, the writer had reiterated on many occasions in those columns that such accommodation was altogether inadequate, even in the city itself. Next year, Cork was due to host an Irish Industrial and Agricultural Fair, and with the Eucharistic Congress taking place in Dublin, the writer anticipated an influx of visitors to our shores such as had never been witnessed before. It was the writer's sincere hope that the question of lavatory accommodation would have been properly dealt with before then. Apart from the inconvenience that might have been spared visiting strangers to the city, the writer contended it would have been most unfortunate if these visitors had left with the impression that we were still lagging behind in one of the most basic steps in the march of civilisation.[127]

The December 1931 convening of the Cork County Board of Health examined the interesting topic of meat inspection by-laws. the County Cork Town Traders' Protective Association submitted a request for amendments to the existing by-laws on meat inspection. The association asked that inspections be

[127] *Cork Examiner 16/10/1931*

extended beyond fresh meat in slaughterhouses to also include salt meat, which they argued posed a serious threat to public health. Mr Kelly stated that By-law No. 2, concerning the sale of meat, was too vague and did not provide for adequate inspection in towns. He described some of the salt meat at that time being sold as a "terrible menace" to public health. The Chairman explained that salt meat was often imported in tierces and cases via Dublin and distributed nationwide by rail. He said the Board had no authority over its inspection once it arrived. Previously, veterinary inspectors in Cork had been able to inspect such imports at the quays, and condemn them if necessary, but that practice was no longer in place. Mr R. Daly noted that Mr Kelly's proposal aimed to prevent the distribution of un-inspected or substandard salt meat. Mr Kelly insisted that even if there was lax enforcement at the point of entry, local authorities should still have the power to inspect meat once it was exposed for sale. The Chairman questioned what authority the Board would have over products legally purchased and taxed in Dublin. Mr Kelly replied that the existing by-laws should be referred back for amendment. He pointed out that in towns like Bantry, where meat is slaughtered and sold, there was limited oversight once the product was moved outside the town.

The Assistant Secretary clarified that there were two relevant by-laws: one governing slaughterhouses and another regulating meat exposed for sale in scheduled towns. Mr Kelly questioned whether this meant a veterinary inspector would need to be present to inspect up to 60 beasts weekly. The Assistant Secretary confirmed that this was not the case. Mr Kelly argued for the establishment of a designated inspection area, as prevailing rules only applied to meat sold within specified towns. He suggested the by-law was ineffective because meat sold outside those towns could not be regulated in the same way. Dr Condy, the County Medical Officer of Health, outlined that the existing by-laws covered nine towns outside the urban districts, and included requirements for stamping inspected meat. He acknowledged that such stamping did not apply countywide, and meat could be stamped in one area (e.g., Bantry) even if it was not sold there. Dr Condy explained that meat not stamped and sold

outside scheduled areas fell outside the Board's jurisdiction. If meat was taken to Castletownbere, for instance, it would need to be stamped there. No unstamped meat could legally be exposed for sale in scheduled areas.

Mr Kelly pointed out a loophole: if meat was slaughtered and stamped in Bantry, it could then be sold in unscheduled areas without further regulation, making enforcement difficult. He urged the Board to make the by-laws more comprehensive and specific. Dr Condy responded that while the prevailing by-laws, if enforced properly, offered sufficient inspection within scheduled towns, the real challenge lay in their effective implementation. He added that the inspection of salt meat was governed under broader public health legislation concerning unsound food. If unsound meat—fresh or salted—was found in a shop, it could be seized and destroyed, and legal proceedings could follow. He noted that it was the responsibility of the local Medical Officer, Sanitary Sub-Officers (S.S.O.), and Veterinary Surgeons to inspect all meat on sale. However, the by-laws regarding stamping only applied to fresh meat in scheduled towns. When Mr Kelly asked whether this inspection extended throughout the county, Dr Condy clarified that it did not—it was limited to those towns listed in the official schedule.[128]

A few days later, at a December 1931 meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, Mr E. Allen presided. The Chairman stated that the purpose of the meeting was to revise the rents of cottage holders. Mr Carey remarked that while he was not opposed to reviewing the lists, he felt that the allocation of cottages to two blacksmiths at the last meeting had rendered the process something of a farce. Mr Corry noted that blacksmiths' wages were no longer as high as those of labourers. Following further discussion, the committee began examining the tenant lists. The objective was to eliminate tenants who did not qualify as "agricultural labourers" under the relevant Acts, and to assess which tenants fell under the extended definition provided by the Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1919.

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[128] *Evening Echo 14/12/1931*

A letter from the Department of Local Government advised that the committee should terminate the tenancies of individuals in the first category and reallocate those cottages to 'bona fide' agricultural labourers. For the second category of tenants, the Board was instructed to implement a special rent. It was unanimously agreed to increase the rents for cottages in the district as follows: for 17 tenants, from 1 shilling to 2 shillings and 6 pence per week; for two tenants, to 5 shillings per week; and for one tenant, to 7 shillings and 6 pence per week. There are at that time 3,665 cottage tenants in the area; the rents for the remaining 3,645 tenants remain unchanged. The Secretary, Mr Egan, was directed to notify the affected tenants to attend his office and sign the revised agreements. The Chairman added that, in his opinion, the committee had not been unduly harsh on labourers, stating it would be unjust to raise the rent of any tenant whose wages did not exceed £2 per week.[129]

On New Year's Day of 1932, the '*Irish Independent*' reported that, a house owned by the Cork County Board of Health and occupied by Timothy Downey, a carrier from Newtownbarry, Rathluirc, was completely destroyed by fire.[130] The next day, the '*Irish Press*' expanded on the story. Within thirty minutes, the entire dwelling had been consumed by flames. The alarm was raised by a passing motorist, and members of the Gardaí, led by Sergeant Scanlon, along with local civilians, attempted to control the blaze using buckets of water drawn from a nearby well. Despite their efforts, they were unable to contain the fire and instead focused on preventing it from spreading to the adjacent row of 21 houses. The front portion of the house had been converted into a shop not long beforehand, and was stocked with tobacco, cigarettes, sweets, fruit, and other goods—all of which were destroyed, along with the household furniture and belongings. The Cork Fire Brigade was contacted by telephone, but before they could arrive, they were informed that the house had already been destroyed and that the spread

[129] *Cork Examiner 16/12/1931*

[130] *Irish Independent 1/1/1932*

of the fire had been brought under control. Timothy Downey Jr (his son), and another occupant managed to escape through the rear of the house. The cause of the fire remained unknown. The row of houses, including the damaged property, was owned by the Cork County Board of Health.[131]

A few days later, the '*Irish Press*' reported that at the annual meeting of the Munster Association of Veterinary Inspectors, held in Cork City, Mr. T. Alexander of Kinsale was unanimously elected Chairman for the forthcoming year, while Mr. C. P. Hines of Lismore, Co. Waterford, was appointed Honorary Secretary. During the meeting, members discussed the salaries being offered by various local Cork County Boards of Health for conducting milk and meat inspections in rural districts. The general consensus among attendees was that those overseeing the implementation of the Public Health Acts had demonstrated a serious lack of understanding regarding the volume and scope of work required of veterinary officers. It was resolved that a deputation comprising Messrs. S. R. J. Cussen, T. Alexander, Capt. C. P. Creagh, T. R. Mulcahy, and C. P. Hynes would meet with the County Medical Officer of Health to present their concerns in full.[132]

Almost two weeks later, the '*Kerry Champion*' documented that, at an adjourned full meeting of Cork County Council, chaired by Mr. W. J. Broderick, a recommendation from the County Board of Health was considered regarding the recent resignation of Dr. J. C. Troy from his role as Assistant County Medical Officer of Health. The recommendation proposed that the Appointments Commissioners be asked to nominate a replacement for the position. However, Mr. David Leo O'Gorman opposed the suggestion, arguing that the county already employed 75 dispensary medical officers and 21 doctors affiliated with hospitals. Given the prevailing circumstances in the county, he contended that it was not advisable to fill the vacant post. Instead, he proposed that Dr. Condy, the County Medical Officer, be asked to reallocate

[131] *Irish Press 2/1/1932*

[132] *Irish Press 6/1/1932*

the responsibilities across the two remaining assistant medical officers. The Council ultimately agreed to defer the decision until the next meeting, pending the attendance and input of Dr. Condy.[133]

In February 1932, at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health held yesterday in the Bankruptcy Court, Courthouse, Cork, and presided over by Captain Jerh. Collins, several matters were discussed. A key issue concerned a cottage at Rowls, Meelin, Newmarket, which had previously been suggested for sale to the farmer on whose land it stood for £5. Mr. Hinchin reminded the Board that this matter had been raised at the previous meeting, where it was agreed that Engineer Mr. Linehan would attend to provide clarity. It emerged that the cottage, constructed in 1886, had been built by the farmer himself on a corner of his own land, in a haggard, with no legal access to the property. Mr. Walsh recommended that the matter be postponed, while Mr. Daly, Assistant Secretary of the North Cork Committee, confirmed that the cottage was not built on the originally acquired site. The Chairman had clarified that Mr. Linehan bore no responsibility, as he had no involvement in the original construction. Mr. Hurley proposed an adjournment and recommended legal proceedings to recover possession of the cottage. Mr. Divly confirmed the cottage was owned by the County Board of Health. Mr. Exham added that Mr. Broderick, Chairman of the County Board, opposed selling the property for such a nominal sum. Mr. Hinchin agreed, stating he wished to retain it for a labourer rather than sell it. Legal advice indicated that although no access had been formally reserved, the law implied a right of way. Mr. Linehan noted the cottage had remained unoccupied since its construction. Mr. Hinchin alleged the landowners who had received payment for the site had obstructed tenancy and were now benefiting from the property. On the motion of Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Hurley, the Board resolved not to proceed with the sale.

Mr. Hinchin raised concerns over the long-standing delay regarding the Dromina water scheme. Mr. Coughlan, Chief

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[133] *Kerry Champion 16/1/1932*

Engineer, explained that although the scheme had been approved two years prior and funding secured, complications arose in acquiring land for the well. The landowner demanded £50 and the occupier £30 in compensation, a sum the Northern Committee had refused to pay. The Chairman inquired about alternative sites and suggested adjourning the matter. Mr. Hinchin, however, objected to further delays, emphasising the dire need for clean water in the area. The Chairman replied that the Board could not arbitrarily spend ratepayers' money. The Board had agreed to guarantee contributions of £29 and £17 to the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs for the installation of telephone services in both Aghabullogue and Lady's Bridge. Mr. Exham noted that Father Roche supported the Aghabullogue initiative and had pledged his assistance in progressing the scheme.

Dr. Condy, County Medical Officer of Health, presented his January report. A total of 121 cases of infectious diseases were notified: 13 diphtheria, 41 scarlet fever, 12 typhoid, 1 puerperal fever, 1 chickenpox, 3 erysipelas, 3 whooping cough, 2 measles, and 45 tuberculosis. Ten diphtheria cases occurred in the southern region. He reported a decline in diphtheria over the past quarter, attributing this to the immunisation scheme. Clinics, including those at Lower Glanmire School, had been actively involved, and no deaths had occurred among the over 6,000 immunised children and adolescents. Eleven of the typhoid cases were reported in the northern area. Under the school medical inspection programme, 856 children had been examined: 362 in the northern area, 216 in the southern, and 278 in the western. Additionally, 170 midwives had submitted notifications of intent to practice during January, and the list was forwarded to the Central Midwives Board. Birth figures for the month were 103 in the northern area, 125 in the southern, and 106 in the western. The Board approved the report.

A deputation from Doneraile attended to request a water supply extension. Mr. Walsh, acting as spokesman, appealed for permission to tap the main serving Buttevant at Rossa and lay a pipeline via Brooke Village to Doneraile, which would provide water to a three-mile radius. He stressed the urgent need, stating residents even struggled to find water for

ducks during summer months, and that clean milk production and butter quality were being compromised. Dr. Condy noted he had evaluated a previous proposal involving Ballinvokeen Camp, which was deemed too costly, but was not familiar with the Rossa scheme. Rev. J. H. Osborne, also part of the deputation, explained that the lack of water supply adversely affected schools under his management. He supported the Rossa proposal as both viable and cost-effective. Mr. Walsh added that locals were willing to pay any necessary water rates. Rev. Osborne concluded that the prevailing state of affairs was unacceptable in a modern society. Mr. Coughlan, C.E., said the original plan had been to supply Brooke Cross from Rossa, with later consideration given to extending the line into Doneraile at an estimated cost of £1,600.[134]

At a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health held in the Council Chamber of the Courthouse during March, Captain J. Collins, H.C. (vice-chairman), presided. One of the matters discussed was a letter from Messrs. M. Purcell & Co., solicitors to the Macroom Urban Council, requesting payment of water rent amounting to £38 per year for the supply to Macroom Cottage Hospital. The claim related to the period from 1921, when the Macroom Workhouse was destroyed by fire, up to the prevailing time. This request was based on an adjustment award made in 1903 between Macroom Rural District Council and Macroom Urban Council. Previously, the Macroom Guardians had paid the rent until the workhouse was burned down, and the County Board of Health, as successors to the Guardians, were now considered liable for this payment. The chairman questioned why the claim had been delayed for ten years. It was clarified that the Board of Assistance was only responsible for the water rent from the time the cottage hospital was established. The matter was eventually referred to the South Cork Board of Assistance, with the suggestion that it also be forwarded to the County Council. Another issue addressed was the flooding in Midleton. The Secretary of the Midleton Town Traders' Protective Association had written to highlight the low level of the river running alongside the town, which could have facilitated flood prevention works. Both the

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[134] *Cork Examiner 9/2/1932*

County Surveyor and a representative had inspected the area and recommended lowering the riverbed and constructing an additional overflow channel. The estimated cost for these works was about £400. However, there was uncertainty about funding, with the County Board of Health indicating they had previously distanced themselves from the issue. The matter was then referred to the County Council for further consideration.

The meeting also considered the problem of unauthorised burials in the Old Church Burial Ground at Cove. The Minister for Local Government and Public Health had forwarded extracts from the Southern Committee of Health's minutes concerning three burials carried out without proper licences, including one instance where the remains were buried less than two feet below the surface, contrary to regulations requiring a minimum depth of four feet. The Minister had directed that legal action be taken against those responsible. It was reported that the caretaker had submitted information about the burials, which took place without licences on the 28th and 29th of February. Since the burial ground was officially closed, with no room for further interments, concerns were raised about the fairness of requiring people with existing burial rights in the old graveyard to pay for spaces in the new adjoining burial ground. It was noted that some believed this arrangement was unjust, and the Board was urged to consider allowing free grave spaces in the new ground for those entitled to burial in the old one. Overall, the meeting reflected ongoing challenges involving financial liabilities, infrastructure needs, and the management of burial grounds, balancing administrative regulations with the needs and rights of local communities.[135]

At a May 1932 meeting of the North Cork Committee of the Cork County Board of Health held at the County Home in Mallow, Mr. J. M. O'Connor presided, with members including Messrs. Murphy, Cora, Meaney, Buckley, Barrett, Daly, Crowley, and Hinchin in attendance. The committee discussed the possibility of developing a housing scheme for

[135] *Cork Examiner 15/3/1932*

labourers in the Millstreet district. Mr. Meaney proposed that a committee should consider the feasibility of erecting around 20 houses there, suggesting that the Department of Local Government be asked to assist financially. He noted that the State intended to build houses with rents set at 4 shillings per week, while the prospective tenants were willing to pay 5 shillings per week. The chairman commented that a larger housing scheme would be needed to cover the entire North Cork rural district, a view echoed by Mr. Murphy. The Board's engineer, Mr. Coughlan, reported that an official from the Department had recently visited the district and requested details to formulate a new housing scheme. The cost of each house was not to exceed £300, with loan repayments spread over 35 years at an interest rate of 5½ per cent per annum. For the first two years, only interest payments would be required.

Mr. Coughlan explained the financial implications in detail, outlining that a house costing £100 would require annual payments of about £16 in the early years. With a government grant covering 20% of costs, the net liability to the Board would still include the cost of repairs and the shortfall after rent was deducted. This deficit was estimated to average around £9 per house. He added that a penny rate in the pound on the valuation of the Kanturk district could raise £330, enough to cover the deficit for 22 houses, with proportional increases for larger schemes. The chairman noted that the government was no longer providing funding under the same terms as before, and Mr. Murphy emphasised the need to prepare for a rising demand for housing, especially as money would become scarcer. He proposed that the engineer draft specifications for houses costing no more than £150 to build, excluding the cost of land, to enable the construction of more houses. The engineer responded that rising material costs made this difficult but acknowledged that the final cost depended on the level of finish. Discussion continued around affordability and future housing needs, with Mr. Crowley questioning if the £9 deficit per house would be met by local rates. The engineer recalled that earlier cottage schemes in the Kanturk area had cost between £60 and £80 per house, but prevailing prices had escalated to around £280 to £300. Mr. Meaney suggested that a government-established board

to bulk-purchase building materials could reduce costs, similar to the existing Combined Purchasing Board, thereby benefiting taxpayers and tenants. Members debated the number of houses required, with estimates around 600 for the Kanturk area alone. The prevailing stock of cottages was about 660, and an additional 250 were needed to meet demand. The chairman noted that rents collected were insufficient even to cover repair costs, and Mr. Murphy pointed out that many tenants struggled to pay even low rents, raising concerns about the viability of building new houses that tenants might not afford. Despite these challenges, the chairman believed that most prospective tenants would be willing to pay around 4 shillings per week. Mr. Murphy expressed scepticism, noting that prevailing tenants often failed to pay rents due, sometimes as low as a few pence per week. The Assistant Secretary reported that there were at that time 2,564 cottages in North Cork, and Mr. Meaney concluded by suggesting a comprehensive scheme to build approximately 888 houses in the area.[136]

At a June 1932 meeting of the Cork County Board of Public Health held in the County Council Chamber at the Courthouse in Cork, Captain Jeremiah Collins, H.C., and later Mr. W. J. Broderick, T.D., who chaired the meeting, presided over discussions that included a deputation from the village of Banteer, seeking the provision of a water supply and sewerage system for their village. Mr. D. Hinchin explained that the issue had been previously considered by both the Board and the North Cork Committee but was rejected due to the village's small size. However, he noted that the government was offering grants aimed at reducing unemployment through such public works. Banteer was described as a growing and prosperous village with many new houses being built, but with only one inadequate pump for its water needs. Mr. Hinchin suggested that a report be obtained from Dr. Condy, the County Medical Officer of Health, to assess the necessity of the scheme, and that the government be asked to provide financial assistance. Once the grant amount was known, the Board could decide on how to allocate the charges, with the engineer providing an

[136] *Cork Examiner 17/5/1932*

estimate of the scheme's cost, which was about £3,500. The chairman questioned the likelihood of receiving government support, to which Mr. Hinchin confidently replied that the government could not simply refuse. A motion was proposed requesting the government to grant at least half the estimated cost and for Dr. Condy to report on the necessity of the scheme. This was seconded and unanimously agreed. It was noted that the North Cork Board had not yet approved the proposal.

The meeting also addressed sewerage issues in Douglas, where many houses were still not connected to the main sewer. Mr. Kidney reported that a deputation had requested action to compel landlords to connect their properties. The Southern Committee of Health had already served notices and planned to take immediate legal steps if owners failed to comply. The chairman confirmed that legal action would be pursued if necessary. Attention was then drawn to the urgent need to acquire land for the extension of Killagh graveyard, as the old graveyard was becoming overcrowded. Mr. Ahern emphasised the danger of congestion and the community's anxiety for the extension to proceed swiftly. Mr. Broderick explained that efforts were underway to purchase adjoining land owned by Mrs. Cronin, who had sold it to monks at Melleray. Both the monks and Mrs. Cronin had agreed to the sale, but approval from the Land Commission was required. The Board's solicitor was actively working to secure this sanction, but delays from the Land Commission were causing frustration. Mr. Ahern acknowledged that the community understood the Board had done everything possible to expedite the matter. Mr. Broderick reiterated the severity of the congestion, mentioning that recent burials had to be made under the wall of the old graveyard. A resolution was passed, moved by Mr. Daly and seconded by Mr. Kelly, requesting that the government provide a grant from relief funds to complete the Castlemartyr drainage scheme, which was estimated to cost £2,000.

Regarding cottage rents, Mr. Hinchin referred to a letter from the Department of Local Government about raising rents for labourers' cottages. He noted that no action had been taken by the North Cork Committee, nor had any complaints been

received from South or West Cork. However, he mentioned a particular Cork County Council member—not part of the Board of Health—who called himself the Cork County President of the Cottage Tenants' Association. This individual had allegedly been going around the county, telling tenants that the Boards of Health were raising rents and was forming branches of the Association. Mr. Hinchin expressed that while he had no objection to tenants being represented, he felt the County President was unfair to both the Boards of Health and the tenants themselves. He alleged that this person had initially helped raise rents by collecting a shilling from each tenant to support their cause, but after failing, shifted to that of campaigning for tenants to purchase their cottages.[137]

At an August 1932 meeting of the North Cork County Board of Health, following the Engineer's report, Mr. Coughlan stated that £300 was needed for repairs in the Fermoy district and £1,000 for the Kanturk district cottages. He noted that in other areas under the Board's jurisdiction, funds were sufficient to continue work for some time. Responding to the Chairman, Mr. Coughlan confirmed that the funds for the Kanturk area were practically exhausted. Mr. M. Murphy proposed, seconded by Mr. J. Barry, that the County Board of Health be asked to advance £1,300 to the Committee for repairs in these two districts. The motion was passed unanimously. A notice of motion from Mr. J. Barry was also presented, requesting that the Minister for Local Government and Public Health hand over the married quarters at Buttevant — most of which, about fifty houses, were unoccupied and in a serious state of disrepair — to the Board of Health Committee. The aim was to provide these homes to deserving tenants living in unhealthy conditions in Buttevant town. Mr. Barry emphasised the plight of many people living in poor housing in Buttevant and expressed regret that the properties were allowed to decay. The Engineer reported receiving a letter dated 5th December 1931 from the Minister, indicating the Department's willingness to lease a block of twenty-four dwellings for 99 years at a total rent of £62 18s, conditional on the Board submitting an approved

[137] *Cork Examiner 14/6/1932*

repair scheme. The cost of the repairs was estimated at £724 16s 8d. It was agreed, on Mr. Meaney's suggestion, to adjourn the discussion to a future date.[138]

During early September, a special meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the Washington St. Courthouse, Cork city centre, with Mr. W. J. Broderick, T.D., presiding. The main business was to consider the Department of Local Government and Public Health's circular explaining the provisions of the Housing (Financial and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1932, particularly regarding the proposed construction of additional labourers' cottages. The Secretary, Mr. Owen Callanan, submitted a statement detailing the cottages already built and the number of vacant plots acquired and paid for. The financial details revealed the following:

- Total cottages already erected: 7,558
- Vacant plots acquired and paid for: 208
- Net assessable valuation for the prevailing year: £1,010,439 4s. 7d.
- Product of a penny rate in the £: £4,210 3s. 3d.

Additionally the, outstanding loan balances on cottages as of 31 March 1932 sat at:

- Northern area: £295,319 18s. 7d.
- Southern area: £478,200 2s. 7d.
- Western area: £138,981 15s. 7d.

This meant that the total amounted to £912,501 16s. 9d.

The report proposed the erection of 1,250 additional cottages across the county health district, divided among the rural districts according to valuation. During the discussion, Mr. M. Murphy remarked that a rate of one penny in the pound (£) would not raise sufficient funds to meet the housing needs. Mr. C. J. McCarthy cautioned against rushing into new housing schemes due to the prevailing economic disturbances, recommending postponement until the financial

[138] *Cork Examiner 26/7/1932*

situation improved and loans could be obtained at a lower interest rate, around 4½ per cent. He argued that borrowing now at a higher interest rate of about 5½ per cent was unwise when cheaper loans were likely to be available soon. Mr. White reminded Mr. McCarthy of the ongoing "war," to which McCarthy responded that the war would not last much longer, and if it did, cottages might not be needed.

Mr. O'Gorman pointed out that the financial calculations were only approximate and suggested the Secretary's report be printed and circulated for members to study in detail. Mr. Murphy stressed the importance of thoroughly considering the financial side, noting that at least 900 cottages were needed in North Cork alone. He urged the Council to take advantage of the rare opportunity, especially as up to 60 per cent of the cost would be covered by government grants. He estimated that suitable cottages could be built for approximately £200 each where land was affordable. Mr. D. O'Callaghan expressed reluctance to fund cottages in North Cork or build where they were not needed, particularly in West Cork. Mr. J. M. O'Connor, Chairman of the North Cork Board of Health, confirmed his Board had already decided on the required number of cottages per rural area. Mr. T. J. Murphy, T.D., strongly advocated for availing of the scheme, noting the low vacancy rates and reduced arrears in places such as the town of Dunmanway. The meeting also reviewed historical subsidies for cottage building, which had ranged from 17 to 25 per cent under previous governments but had now increased to 60 per cent under the prevailing Government's scheme. It was noted that the government contribution of £120 per cottage would reduce the cost to tenants and the Board of Health to about £80 each, with land acquisition estimated at approximately £25 per acre.[139]

A meeting of the South Cork County Board of Health and Public Assistance was held a fortnight later at the Boardroom, Douglas Road, Cork City, with Mr. W. J. Broderick, T.D., presiding. Present were Ald. Allen, Messrs P. Monahan (City Manager), D. Gamble, S. Cronin, T. Quill, P. O'Donoghue, P. J. Daly, M. J. Corry, T.D., W. Ryan, J.

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[139] *Cork Examiner 2/9/1932*

Buckley, and B. Cooney. On the motion of Mr. Gamble, it was decided to provide Daniel Dennehy, who had given a transfusion of blood to save the life of a patient, with a suit of clothes and a pair of boots. Mr. Monahan moved, in accordance with notice, that the question of discontinuing the baking of bread in the County Home and obtaining supplies by tender in future be considered. He explained that the price paid for bread was higher than could be obtained externally by contract, and the quality was lower than what could be sourced outside. He did not believe the proposal would displease the labourers, as they would likely find employment with the firm awarded the contract. Ald. Mr. Allen expressed the view that the matter should be adjourned for three months. Mr. Cronin thought the quality of the bread was as good as it had been 20 years ago. Aid. Allen admitted that although there had been a marked improvement in the bread recently, patients had previously received bread unfit for consumption, but this had now been corrected.

Mr. Gamble moved that a deputation from the Cork Operative Bakers' Society, present at the meeting, be heard, which was agreed to as well. Mr. P. Murphy, speaking for the Bakers' Society, requested that bread supply to the patients remain with the bakery. The Society had investigated the complaints made against the bakers and were confident these would not recur. They were prepared to assist the Board in every way and suggested the baking not be outsourced by contract, noting that displaced workers were unlikely to be employed by external contractors, who could hire whomever they wished. The Chairman emphasised that the Board's primary concern was ensuring patients received food of proper quality, to which they were entitled. He acknowledged that the criticisms of the bakery were supported by statements made during the meeting, particularly by the deputation. He was willing to defer a decision on the matter for a short period. Aid. Allen produced a sample of the prevailing bread, stating it was as good as any baked elsewhere. After further discussion, consideration of the matter was adjourned for three months on Aid. Allen's motion. The Assistant Matron reported that on the 8th instant, a patient named Mary O'Keeffe, aged 55, threw herself from a second-storey window at St. Teresa's Hospital.

She escaped injury by falling on another patient, Mary Duggan, aged 51, who was sitting below. Mary Duggan was thrown forward violently, injuring her knee, and was taken to hospital. Mary O'Keeffe had recently been transferred from the mental division. Arrangements were being made to prevent a recurrence of such incidents.

A letter was read from the Local Government Board stating that the Minister had observed from the Board's minutes of the 27th ult. that the Board had accepted Mr. M. J. Murphy's resignation as Assistance Officer. The Minister ordered advertisements be issued inviting candidates aged between 25 and 40 for the post but pointed out that the Board could not legally limit applicants by age. The Board's legal adviser responded that Article 52 did not preclude the Board from prescribing specified ages, provided no appointment was made of a person under 21 without Ministerial consent. The legal advisers noted that officers aged between 25 and 40 were best suited for these posts. Article 32 only provided that no one under 21 could be appointed without Minister's consent. It was decided to ask the Minister to consent to the appointment. Messrs. O'Brien and Driscoll appeared before the Board as a deputation from the Cork Unemployed (Able-Bodied) Men's Association regarding public assistance cases and the number of people relieved. The Chairman stated the Board had managed public assistance cases as effectively as possible and assured that any cases brought to their attention by the Association would receive sympathetic consideration. Arising from a report by the special committee which visited Macroom Cottage Hospital the previous week, the Chairman said the report presented to him was very satisfactory, and he was pleased with the general administration of the hospital. It was agreed to allow leave of absence, in accordance with schedule, to temporary employees in the service of the Board for periods not exceeding two weeks.[140]

Captain Jerc. Collins, H.C., and subsequently Mr. W. J. Broderick, T.D., Chairman, presided at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, held during October. In connection with the sewerage scheme and extension of the water main at

[140] *Cork Examiner 15/9/1932*

Liscarroll, Mr. Hinchin asked about progress being made by the contractor. Mr. Maurice Daly (Acting Secretary North Cork Committee) reported that the contractor, Mr. Edmund Daly from Fennoy, had not yet signed his bond. Mr. Hinchin expressed disappointment, noting the high unemployment in the area and the urgent need for the work. The Secretary, Mr. Calknan, explained that a loan for the project was more than two years old and its availability was now doubtful. Mr. Hinchin warned that if the contractor did not start the work soon, the contract would be cancelled, and he proposed that the Engineer (Mr. Coughlan) be directed to carry out the work by direct labour. Mr. O'Donovan asked if the contractor had refused to sign the bond, to which the Secretary suggested that before any order was made, the Board's solicitor, Mr. Dudley, should write to the contractor giving a week's notice to commence the work. This was agreed.

The Engineer, Mr. B. O'Flynn, reported that since preparing the initial estimate for draining Blarney village, levels had been taken showing that the cost would need to increase by about £1,200 because all sewage must be pumped to discharge into the river. The drainage scheme faced significant difficulties: purification works could only be located either behind Messrs Mahony's Mill, opposite the Castle grounds' entrance, or at Corcoran's Inch on the village's western side. The first option risked discharging effluent above the Castle grounds, affecting its surroundings and view. Dr. Condy advised that there was no great necessity for a drainage scheme due to effective daily scavenging and that about half the houses lacked yards, making sanitary arrangements difficult. The Secretary also stated the initial estimated expenditure was £2,600. The Engineer was doubtful the scheme could be successfully implemented. On Mr. Hinchin's suggestion, it was decided to apply to the Minister for Local Government for a grant for the Banteer sewerage and waterworks scheme.

Regarding a letter from Midleton Urban District Council about the matter of flooding in the town, Mr. R. Daly said the County Board of Health had resolved months prior to do everything possible to relieve flooding and to request a grant from the Relief of Unemployment Fund. Mr. Broderick

confirmed the grant had been received, but Mr. Daly expressed frustration at its lateness given the rising river levels and the difficulties winter would bring. He urged that work commence immediately, rather than wait for the County Council meeting. Mr. Broderick questioned if work was underway; Mr. Daly responded it was not, and reiterated the need for prompt action. It was noted that, at the previous County Council meeting, it was agreed to consider increasing the grant from £25 to £100. The County Surveyor, Mr. O'Connor, was asked to liaise with Midleton Urban Council regarding arrangements. A grant of £600 had subsequently been received from the Minister for Local Government towards the work. Mr. Brasier, T.D., attending on the matter, stated the County Council had no objection to increasing its contribution to £100, with the remainder of the £700 cost to be provided by Midleton Urban Council, Lord Midleton, and the Midleton Distillery Co. Mr. Broderick noted that originally, the Midleton Urban Council's contribution was £50, with an understanding no further call would be made. Mr. Brasier confirmed that the Urban Council was arranging to provide the £25 balance. Mr. Broderick moved, seconded by Mr. R. Daly, that the County Council grant £100 towards the work, which was agreed. Mr. Daly suggested contacting landowners to seek consent for diverting the river through their lands to facilitate drainage work, which would avoid delays. Mr. Brasier remarked that legally landowners could not prevent the Board taking such steps, though it would be courteous to consult them. Mr. Broderick affirmed they did not wish to invoke the law unnecessarily.

The County Surveyor, Mr. O'Connor, reported that he had advised Midleton Urban Council to defer the work until Spring, as it was unsuitable to carry out in winter. Diverting the Dungourney river was necessary before commencing. He suggested that if landowners signed indemnities against legal action, work could proceed. Mr. Brasier proposed employing a dredge to clean the river, which Mr. Hinchin questioned, fearing machinery might reduce labour opportunities. Mr. Brasier reassured him that he supported employment but stressed the urgency due to health risks from flooding. The Chairman suggested the Surveyor liaise with Midleton Urban

Council, with the County Council providing their financial share and concluding the matter.[141]

Another meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held during November in the County Council Chamber, at the Courthouse. Captain Collins, M.C.C., Chairman, presided. Mr. Dudley, solicitor, on behalf of the North Cork Committee, requested that a resolution to acquire a well compulsorily in connection with the Newmarket and Castleisland water supply, which had been adopted by the Northern Committee, be confirmed by the Board. On the proposition of Mr. Hinchin, seconded by Mr. Kelly, the resolution was confirmed. The Acting Secretary drew attention to a claim by the Sisters of Mercy, Charleville, regarding a plot taken over from the Community by the Board for a storage tank with the right to lay pipes. Mr. Coughlan, engineer to the Northern Committee, said the plot was taken over from the Reverend Mother, and the Board laid the storage tanks there. It was decided the terms would be fixed later, and then the Board offered the Reverend Mother £30 compensation. She refused and requested 1,000 gallons of water daily free of charge. The Board had not agreed to this proposal. In a previous letter, the Reverend Mother stated she was promised by a member of the Board that the Community would get a free water supply for their surrender of the plot. Mr. Exham, solicitor to the Board, suggested that the Reverend Mother should be written to, pointing out that no agreement was made when the Board took possession with her consent, and as the Board could not consider the question of a free water supply, she be asked to state what price she wanted for the plot. This was agreed.

The Acting Secretary brought attention to a claim by the Sisters of Mercy in Charleville concerning a plot that the Board had taken over from the Community for a storage tank and the right to lay pipes. Mr. Coughlan, engineer to the Northern Committee, explained that the plot had been acquired from the Reverend Mother, with storage tanks laid by the Board. While the terms were to be fixed later, the Board had initially offered £30 compensation, which was

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[141] *Cork Examiner 11/10/1932*

refused. Instead, the Sisters requested 1,000 gallons of water daily free of charge, a proposal the Board had not accepted. The Reverend Mother had previously stated that she was promised a free water supply for surrendering the plot, but the Board clarified that no such agreement had been formalised when possession was taken with her consent. It was agreed that the Reverend Mother should be asked to specify a price for the plot, as the Board could not consider granting a free water supply.

Mr. Patrick Daly raised concerns about delays with the Caherdugg water supply scheme, noting that although the contract began twelve months ago, the work was far from complete, with only two men at that time employed on the site. The Acting Secretary said the contractor had been given notice previously and promised completion in a few weeks, but despite multiple written communications from Mr. Coughlan, no progress had been made. The Chairman enquired about the contract's terms, and the Acting Secretary confirmed that once the contract period expired, the Board could impose a fine or take over and complete the work themselves, charging the contractor accordingly. Mr. Hinchin criticised the prevalence of contractors taking on jobs and failing to finish them in North Cork. He pointed out that the contractor had the entire site open but employed very few workers, while others were idle nearby. He suggested that it would be more cost-effective for the North Cork Board to employ an additional engineer and carry out the work directly, especially since this was a relatively small £900 job that had dragged on for a year. It was agreed, following proposals by Mr. Daly and Mr. Hinchin, to give the contractor a final notice to complete the work within seven days. The Local Appointments Commission responded to the Board's request regarding two surgeon dentist appointments under the School Medical Service scheme, recommending Miss Mary Margaret Clarke and Miss Mary Josephine Crosbie. Miss Clarke, practising in Bantry and with prior experience as a temporary school dentist, was given the option to choose her district. Miss Crosbie, practising in Galway and previously working under the Galway School Medical Inspection Scheme, was also appointed. A letter from the Department addressed Mr. John O'Connor's claim

for £50 8s. for his work as clerk of works on the Kiskeen sewer, which had been under consideration for some time. As the matter was still unresolved between the Board and the Department of Local Government, the Board decided to appoint Mr. O'Connor temporarily as general clerk of works for ongoing northern area schemes at four guineas per week until further notice.

The Commission of Inquiry into the sale of labourers' cottages sought the Board's opinion on the desirability and feasibility of a scheme for selling cottages under the Labourers' Acts. Mr. Hinchin expressed that someone should be appointed to represent the Board before the Commission, arguing that labourers were keen to buy their cottages and deserved to own their homes, just as the tenant farmers did. Mr. Hurley supported this, proposing Mr. Hinchin to give evidence, pleased that he now had support for the idea he had advocated for years. Mr. Hinchin noted that he had proposed the idea five years earlier, but failed to get support at the time, believing ownership would make cottiers value their homes more. Mr. Michael Daly suggested that any scheme should make purchase optional rather than compulsory, proposing that the Chairman of the County Board of Health, Mr. Broderick, T.D., be asked to give evidence before the Commission if he consented, adding that he was not opposed to Mr. Hinchin's involvement.

Mr. Kelly expressed concern that many cottiers might not wish to purchase their homes, since they at that time paid a low rent of about 10 shillings per week, with repairs done for them. He doubted that terms under a new Act would be better, and instead suggested that tenant farmers faced more responsibility when buying their homes. He feared that if the scheme went ahead, ex-national teachers and ex-policemen might buy cottages, potentially forcing labourers out. Mr. Hurley agreed that in many cases, labourers might sell or be bought out. Ultimately, it was decided to request the Chairman to attend the Commission and give evidence, with Mr. Hinchin voluntarily stepping aside in favour of the Chairman. The Chairman also raised concerns about sewerage works at Blackrock, noting local demands to extend the sewerage pipe to deep water. The Cork Harbour

Commissioners had promised to facilitate this by removing any obstructions to drainage. Additionally, a smaller pipe at Ringaskiddy needed extension to high water. These improvements were important due to a valuable local trade in winkles and shellfish, amounting to approximately 600 tons annually.[142]

In December 1932, a meeting of the Southern Committee, Cork County Board of Health was held, with Mr. R. Daly, M.C.C. (Chairman), presiding. A deputation representing the residents of Ringaskiddy, Shanbally, Monkstown and Raffeen appeared before the Committee to discuss a proposed water supply and sewerage scheme for the area. The deputation, including Rev. Fr. O'Kegan, J.P., Rev. Fr. Cullinane, O.C., and Rev. Fr. O'Regan, explained that these districts, with a combined population of around 1,000, were at that time poorly served by water supply. Residents relied on a few well pumps that were often out of order. They sought the Committee's recommendation for a new water supply scheme as a priority, noting that there were two large schools in the locality with very primitive sanitary arrangements, and while they also desired a general sanitary scheme, the water supply was their primary concern. The Engineer informed the Committee that Raffeen already had a fail-water supply, which was then under-going several improvements, and suggested that a report from Dr. Condy, the County Medical Officer of Health, would be helpful. It was agreed that both the Engineer, Mr. O'Flynn, and Dr. Condy would submit a joint report for consideration at the next meeting. The deputation then withdrew, with Rev. Fr. O'Regan expressing thanks for the Committee's attention. Separately, Mr. P. Bradley, M.C.C., presented a petition signed by residents of Blackrock and supported by Rev. Fr. Hegarty, C.C., requesting the extension of the lighting system along the road from Castle Road to Ringmahon Cross, including the village of Ballinvoe with its 35 cottages. Mr. Bradley emphasised the urgent need for improved lighting, and the Engineer was instructed to prepare a report for the next meeting.

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[142] *Cork Examiner 15/11/1932*

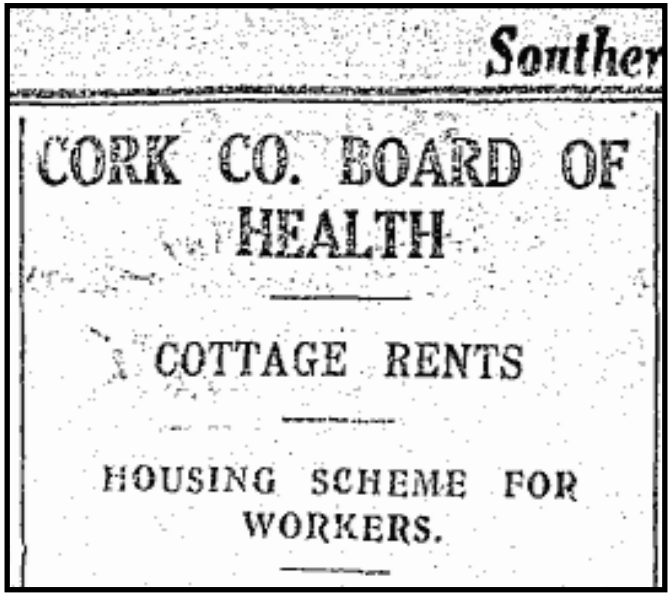
Dr. Condy also submitted a report regarding the overcrowded condition of St. Gobnait's Burial Ground in Ballyvomney. He highlighted the absence of an official caretaker and noted that the Catholic section was completely full, with graves and headstones so close together that it was difficult to navigate without stepping on them. The graveyard had fallen into disrepair, becoming overgrown and untidy, creating public health concerns and violating respect for the deceased. Dr. Condy recommended that no further unauthorised burials be permitted in the Catholic portion. In response, Mr. Corry proposed identifying those responsible for the cemetery's upkeep and pursuing legal action if they failed to properly maintain the grounds. It was agreed to write to those responsible, warning them of prosecution should the cemetery remain neglected.

Mr. E. O'Neill, T.D., spoke on behalf of a deputation regarding water supply issues in parts of Crosshaven, which affected both permanent residents and a seasonal population that could reach around 4,000 in summer. He noted that many houses in Graball Bay lacked any water supply and suggested that sinking artesian wells near Graball Bay and Church Bay would be more effective than extending the existing supply. The Chairman remarked that the Committee was not responsible for the prevailing poor sanitary conditions. The Secretary read a letter from Dr. Condy and the Engineer, confirming that a public water supply was urgently needed in Church Bay, Weaver's Point, and Graball Bay to address these issues before the summer season. The Chairman emphasised the need for a government grant to support this work. Mr. Corry expressed concerns about asking local ratepayers, many of whom were farmers, to fund water supplies that primarily benefited holiday homeowners, but Mr. O'Neill countered that most visitors were middle-class city dwellers rather than wealthy millionaires. The Committee decided to request a report from the Engineer on the matter. A motion was passed, proposed by Mr. Crowley and moved by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mr. Corry, to extend the Crosshaven water main from Mr. Kenefick's hotel to Scotchman's Point, at an estimated cost of £400. The affected area was the Carrigaline dispensary district, and a loan was to be sought for the project. Regarding Ballycotton,

the Chairman moved that the standpipe water tap near the local schools be relocated to the schoolhouse side of the road to reduce the danger of children running across the road. This motion was approved.

In housing matters, the Board adopted a resolution proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Mr. Buckley, urging the Government to consider issuing a national loan for housing schemes. The Board noted that although the Housing Act of 1932 provided a substantial contribution towards loan charges, the high interest rate of £6 13s 1d per cent over 35 years, combined with expensive building costs, placed a heavy burden on rates. This hampered local authorities' ability to promote schemes that would meet housing needs and provide much-needed employment. Finally, motions from Mr. Crowley were moved and seconded by Committee members and passed, subject to the securing of a 50 per cent government grant.[143]

[143] *Cork Examiner 6/12/1932*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CORK CO. BOARD OF HEALTH

COTTAGE RENTS

HOUSING SCHEME FOR WORKERS.

The Cork County Board of Health oversaw the construction and administration of social housing schemes for rural labourers.

(Source: 'Southern Star,' 18/6/1932)

A TONIC FOR THE TOWNS, 1933-1934

To commence the New Year of 1933, a special meeting of the Cork County Board of Health took place in the County Council Chamber at the Washington Street Courthouse in Cork city centre, presided over by Mr. W. J. Broderick and Captain Collins. In response to a resolution adopted at the previous meeting, the Minister for Local Government and Public Health informed the Board that the request for a 75% contribution towards the relief works could not be accommodated. Instead, any grant provided would only approximate one-third of the total cost. The Engineer to the Northern Committee, Mr. Coughlan, reported on the proposed water supply for Newmarket. A meeting had taken place on the 7th of the month to negotiate access through lands in Meengorman for the pipeline. However, no agreement was reached with the landowners—Messrs. P. T. Browne, J. Cotter, M. Linehan, and Mrs. M. Curtin. Mr. Daly, Assistant Secretary to the North Cork Committee, confirmed that Dr. Condy, County Medical Officer of Health, had supported the proposed scheme. The Chairman expressed frustration, noting that the water supply project for Newmarket was being delayed by a few individuals and insisted the Board proceed with compulsory acquisition of the required land. The Board had already secured a government grant of £3,000 and was raising a loan of £6,491 to cover the balance. Mr. Exham confirmed that legal steps had already been initiated by Mr. Dudley, solicitor to the North Cork Committee. On the motion of Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Hurley, the Board resolved to acquire the land through compulsory powers.

With regard to housing finance, the Board had earlier requested the Ministry to establish three separate charging areas for loan and housing schemes. However, the Minister replied that under the Housing (Financial and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1932, the entire County Health District constituted the area of charge, and the Minister had no authority to alter this. The Chairman criticised the county-at-large charging model, arguing it encouraged reckless

spending by spreading the financial burden too widely. He maintained that a narrower, localised area of charge would ensure better accountability and cost-awareness.

The Board then considered a proposal from Mr. John Marry, as passed by the North Cork Committee, to provide a water supply at Grange for local schoolchildren and the surrounding area, extending to Johnstown. The estimated cost of the project was £1,500. Mr. P. Daly supported the proposal, emphasising the urgent need for a proper supply. Mr. George Power noted that the Minister for Education, Mr. Derrig, had promised a separate grant in addition to potential funding from the Local Government Department. The Chairman agreed that the financial aspect should not obstruct such a necessary scheme and urged the Board to pursue as much national funding as possible. On the motion of Mr. Daly, seconded by Mr. Hinchin, the scheme was adopted, with an application to be made to both relevant departments for substantial grants. The Board also approved two additional water supply proposals. The first involved extending the water main at Castletownroche along the Doneraile Road at an estimated cost of £150. The second proposed a new water supply for the village of Bartlemy, with an estimated cost of £250. In both cases, the engineer was instructed to prepare plans and loan applications were to be submitted through the County Council.[144]

Another special meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held a couple of weeks later, with Captain Collins, Vice-Chairman, presiding. The estimates for the financial year 1933–34 were presented from the various districts. In the West Cork area, a reduction of £14 was recorded. In contrast, the South Cork estimates reflected an increase of £619. It was clarified that this increase did not relate to ordinary administrative expenses, but rather to the provision of funds for the repayment of loans, replacing the need for new works during the prevailing year. In the North Cork area, an increase of £1,885 was reported, which was similarly attributed to new works undertaken in the previous year. The Assistant Secretary noted that a debit balance of £7,200

[144] *Evening Echo 9/1/1933*

would remain on the accounts relating to labourers' cottages in the North Cork area by the end of March. Mr. Kelly pointed out that, under prevailing legislation, the cost of labourers' cottages was charged against the entire county. He observed that efforts were ongoing to revert these charges back to a rural district basis. He therefore proposed that the County Council should withhold striking the rate until the situation was either clarified or formally amended. The motion was adopted. Subsequently, Mr. Kelly moved that the estimates be adopted, provided that suitable provisions were made to address the accumulated deficit in a manner that would impose the least hardship on ratepayers. Mr. Walsh seconded the motion, and it was duly passed.[145]

In February 1933, the '*Limerick Leader*' reported that the Charleville housing scheme was the subject of considerable concern at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, held that month. Mr William J. Broderick, T.D., Chairman, presided over the meeting, and raised a number of serious issues in connection with the scheme. Mr Broderick reminded members that the construction of 86 houses had previously been identified as a critical need, with strong advocacy for their development. The houses had been completed for approximately 18 months, during which time they ought to have been generating revenue. However, the Chairman pointed out that this had not occurred and sought clarification as to why the houses were not revenue-producing. An investment of £10,000 had been made, and the Chairman expressed concern that the houses were at that time unused and served no benefit to the very people who had originally been identified as being in acute need of housing. The Board's engineer, Mr Coughlan, stated that two of the houses were at that time occupied by individuals who had been residing on the plots prior to their construction. The Chairman noted that no rent was being collected from these occupants. Mr Daly, Secretary to the North Cork Board, explained that these individuals had not been placed in the homes by the Board of Health. Mr Kelly then inquired whether the contractor had received full payment. Mr Coughlan responded that a retention of £900 remained

[145] *Cork Examiner 21/1/1933*

outstanding, which he could not authorise for release until the cottages were formally handed over. The Chairman questioned whether the Board had the authority to take possession of the houses, and complete them independently. Mr Coughlan clarified that the contract had not yet been fulfilled. It was initially due for completion by 31 March 1933, but delays had arisen following a directive from the Department requiring the installation of Irish-made kitchen ranges. When asked about the original specification, the Engineer stated that the contract had allowed for ranges valued at £4. However, the Department's requirement for Irish-made ranges increased the cost to £5 5s each. In an effort to accommodate the contractor, the Board agreed to reduce the specified cost of grates and mantels to balance the additional cost of the Irish-made ranges. A written agreement to this effect had been reached. Despite this, the Chairman insisted that further inaction was unacceptable. He stressed that the houses must be taken over by the Board. Mr Kelly agreed but pointed out that the houses needed to be completed before this could happen. The Engineer repeated that two homes were already occupied. However, the Chairman maintained that vacant possession was necessary for formal takeover and that the Board could not officially recognise unauthorised tenancies.

In response to the Chairman's queries, the Secretary confirmed that the contractor was liable for penalties of £10 per week for failing to complete the project on time. Mr P. Daly proposed that the contractor be given a further month to finalise the contract. The Chairman replied that such extensions had already been granted without result. The prevailing rent for the cottages was reported to be five shillings per week, which, over the 18-month period, would have yielded £8 15s per house—revenue that had been entirely lost. Mr M. Hurley expressed scepticism regarding the intended beneficiaries of the cottages, claiming he did not believe they were built for the poor. Mr K. Daly challenged this assertion, asking who else they might have been intended for. Mr Hurley responded that they may have been designed to benefit a local draper or similar party. Summing up the matter, the Chairman reiterated that the people for whom the 35 cottages had been built were being denied access to them,

and the county was losing out on approximately £450 per year in potential revenue. He described the situation as a scandal both in terms of wasted public funds and unmet social need. The Board had raised the issue repeatedly, and he argued there was now no alternative but to initiate the process of taking over the cottages. Mr Kelly proposed that a formal notice be served on the contractor, warning that unless the contract was completed within a month to the satisfaction of the engineer, the Board would proceed with steps to assume control of the properties. The Chairman noted that, as it stood, the contractor was already liable for penalties amounting to £550. Mr Hurley interjected that the contractor might not be legally bound to install the ranges. The Chairman refuted this, stating that the contractor was obliged to adhere to the Department's specifications. The Board resolved to serve notice on the contractor, giving a final deadline of one month to fulfil all obligations, failing which the Board would undertake appropriate action to take possession of the cottages.[146]

During March 1933, the '*Southern Star*' reported that in a Dáil debate, Mr T. J. Murphy TD, MCC (Labour, Cork West), posed a question to the Minister for Local Government and Public Health, inquiring whether the Minister was aware that the Cork County Board of Health and its three sub-committees had requested that County Cork be divided into three separate administrative areas for the purposes of the Labourers' Acts. Mr Murphy also asked whether, in view of the need to expedite the construction of several hundred labourers' cottages across the county, a decision on the matter would be announced. In response, the Minister confirmed that he was aware of the request. He stated that, under the Housing (Financial and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act of 1932, from the 1st of the following month, the area of charge for expenses incurred by Boards of Health under the Labourers' Acts would be aligned with the county health districts governed by each respective Board. The Minister further explained that he had already informed Cork County Council of this arrangement on 6 January of that year and that he had no legal authority to approve the requested

[146] *Limerick Leader 18/2/1933*

division of the county into three separate areas for the administration of the Labourers' Acts.[147]

A meeting of the Cork County Board of Health took place April 1933, initially presided over by Captain Collins (Vice-Chairman) and later by Mr W. J. Broderick, T.D. (Chairman). Dr. Condy, County Medical Officer of Health, addressed the Board regarding the supply of free milk to needy children. He highlighted concerns that, in five home assistance districts, the scheme had been suspended due to the fact that contractors had not registered their premises in accordance with the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order of 1908, nor complied with the Minister's regulations. He noted that although contracts had already been awarded in the North Cork area, some were issued to suppliers with unregistered dairy facilities. There was no evidence at the time regarding hygiene or production conditions. Dr. Condy advised that it would be a serious step backwards to contract suppliers whose premises and livestock were not regularly inspected by a veterinary surgeon. He recommended that contracts be restricted to registered vendors, and that certification of proper hygiene and handling be mandatory. A letter from the Department supported these concerns, citing the lack of registration and veterinary inspection of North Cork milk suppliers. Mr. R. Kelly stressed that all milk contractors under this scheme should be registered. Mr. R. Daly responded that the contracts were only temporary, dependent on recipients' eligibility. Mr. M. Daly (Mallow Board) added that all but one supplier in North Cork had, since then, been registered. The matter was referred to the North Cork Board of Assistance.

In another matter, the Southern Committee of Health proposed offering £30 for land to extend Marmullane Burial Ground. The landowner initially sought £75 but might have accepted £50. Mr. O'Flynn, Engineer, noted that the site primarily served residents of Passage West Urban District, although the County Board paid for maintenance. It was agreed to ask Passage West Urban Council to share half the cost of the purchase. The Board also approved a 12-month

[147] *Southern Star 18/3/1933*

extension for three clerks of works under the West Cork Committee at prevailing salaries. When asked by the Chairman how they had performed, Mr. O'Mahony (Secretary) confirmed their work had been satisfactory and that the committee had supported their reappointment, despite some initial opposition from Mr. O'Donovan, who believed their pay exceeded the value of their duties. Mr. O'Donovan later withdrew his objection. Mr. Kelly noted that their responsibilities would likely increase under proposed housing developments. Additionally, On the motion of Mr. R. Daly, seconded by Mr. Broderick, the Board granted a superannuation allowance to Dr. P. J. O'Brien, formerly the Medical Officer of Health for Midleton No. 1 Dispensary District.

The contractor for the Athnaleentha water supply scheme, Mr. Timothy O'Connor, appeared before the Board concerning a legal bill of £70. He had been jointly sued with the County Board of Health by Mr. T. O'Riordan for the alleged death of a child caused by drinking water from the newly constructed supply system. Mr. Broderick inquired if the matter had previously been discussed by the Mallow Board. Mr. Maurice Daly (Secretary) confirmed it had, and the Board had recommended reimbursing Mr. O'Connor for his legal costs. Mr. Exham, the Board's legal adviser, clarified that although the Board had paid the decree and their own legal costs, it was unclear whether they were obligated to cover the contractor's expenses. There had been no explicit finding in court that exonerated Mr. O'Connor. The issue stemmed from the use of galvanised piping, which allegedly introduced zinc into the water. Although later testing showed the water was safe, initial analysis indicated 1.2 parts of zinc per 1,000 parts of water, which had led to the court's decision against the Board. Mr. Broderick stated he saw no negligence on the part of the contractor, who had purchased the materials from a reputable supplier. He described the incident as an unfortunate accident and criticised the contractor's decision to defend himself independently. Nevertheless, he proposed the Board pay £25 towards Mr. O'Connor's solicitor's bill, subject to departmental approval. Mr. Kelly seconded the motion, which was carried.

Regarding the unfinished housing development project in Charleville, the Board formally resolved that, due to the contractor's continued failure to complete the contract, the previous offer of leniency was rescinded. Given the urgent housing needs in the area and financial losses to the ratepayers, the Board decided to enforce the penalty clause of £10 per week, effective from 21 March 1932—the original contract completion date. The Board's legal adviser was instructed to initiate recovery proceedings. Mr. Broderick also directed that all future cottage repairs and liabilities would be treated as county-at-large charges. He cautioned that no expenditure exceeding project estimates would be tolerated unless formally approved, and any Board member signing off on unauthorised spending would be held personally liable. Mr. D. Hinchin urged immediate progress on the proposed £1,800 sewerage scheme for Knocknagree. He stressed that the project would provide vital employment in an area facing significant economic hardship.[148]

At the May 1933 full meeting of the Cork County Board of Health, the Minister for Local Government wrote to inform the Board that no additional funds were available for the improvement of the waterworks scheme at Allihies, beyond the existing grant of £500 which had already been allocated. This was received with disappointment, as further funding was required to complete the scheme. The Board also considered a communication from Mr. Timothy O'Connor, a contractor, regarding expenses incurred in defending legal action taken by Mr. Patrick Riordan. The claim related to alleged zinc poisoning contracted by Mr. Riordan's children due to the Analeentha water supply. Mr. O'Connor had sought reimbursement for a portion of his defence costs, as the action was brought jointly against himself and the Board. The Minister advised that he had no authority in the matter. The Chairman, Capt. Collins, stated the issue was one for the Board's legal adviser. Mr. Hurley remarked that it was the first time he had heard of water causing poisoning and agreed the matter required legal guidance. Mr. Broderick cautioned that any unauthorised payment could result in members being

[148] *Cork Examiner 12/4/1933*

surcharged. He concluded that if Mr. O'Connor brought legal action against the Board and succeeded, the Board would comply with the judgement.

Dr. Condy, County Medical Officer of Health, presented his annual report on the school medical service for the year 1932. The service had been significantly affected by staffing shortages. Since February 1932, a vacancy had existed for one assistant medical officer, and for much of the year there had also been a shortage of two health visitors. This reduced staffing impaired the scope and frequency of inspections, although the available staff worked diligently within their limits. Parental co-operation varied across districts. In some areas, nearly 100 per cent of parents attended school premises during medical examinations in order to hear directly from the medical officer any recommendations for their children's welfare. However, in other districts, interest was minimal—even in areas where parental attendance could have been managed with ease. Some parents held the mistaken belief that medical examination was unnecessary unless a child already displayed signs of illness. This view ran counter to the entire preventative purpose of school medical inspection.

The overall parental attendance rate at examinations in 1932 was 34.2 per cent, compared with 30.2 per cent in 1931. Objections to medical examination were received from the parents of 113 children (1.3 per cent), slightly up from 1.2 per cent the previous year. Notice of upcoming inspections continued to be issued in advance to school teachers and managers, both of whom were commended for their cooperation in facilitating the process. Though many school premises were inadequate for medical use, teachers made considerable efforts to provide suitable conditions. School managers also frequently attended examinations and contributed to securing structural improvements, including sanitation measures. Diphtheria immunisation efforts were notably successful in several schools, where it had been implemented. This success was attributed largely to the assistance of school managers and clergy, who promoted the immunisation publicly during church services. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

(N.S.P.C.C.) had also collaborated with the Health Department on various occasions. The co-ordination between the Board of Public Health and its officers, who also managed tuberculosis control, ensured an integrated approach to health services in the county. The Board heard further concerns regarding the supply of milk to children in five Home Assistance districts, especially in North Cork. Dr. Condy reported that much of the milk was being supplied by unregistered vendors operating outside the scope of inspection, in contravention of the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order of 1908. The Board agreed that, in future, milk contracts should only be awarded to registered suppliers who complied with inspection regulations.[149]

In an editorial featured by the '*Kerry News*' during June 1933, The shortage of houses for agricultural labourers was strikingly demonstrated at the special meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, where close on 2,000 claims were received for only 427 four-roomed cottages proposed to be constructed by the Board. It was the writer's opinion that this clearly showed it would take many years before Public Health Boards could succeed in providing cottages and plots for all those in need. The writer believed that the great obstacle in the way of carrying out a comprehensive scheme of labourers' cottages in Kerry lay in the substantial arrears of rent owed on cottages built under the original Labourers' Cottages Acts, as well as the large annual expenses involved in maintaining those cottages. In the writer's view, those cottiers who could pay their various rents regularly, but failed to do so, were their own worst enemies, alongside the numerous other agricultural labourers who still required cottages and plots. If cottiers persisted in their failure to pay the moderate rents fixed on their holdings, the writer opined they must have been prepared to face the consequences of their default. They could not reasonably have expected the ratepayers to cover these shortfalls in addition to other pressing financial burdens. Regarding the County Board of Health, the writer expressed the opinion that it had to be regarded as a courageous body for embarking on such a comprehensive

[149] *Evening Echo 8/5/1933*

cottage scheme under the new Housing Act, especially given the challenging position of rent collection in Kerry. Already, roughly 100 cottages were under construction as part of the Board's first scheme, which was limited to plots then in their possession. The writer noted that the Board's second scheme would replace the most insanitary houses on the recommendation of the Medical Officers of Health in each district, followed by a general housing scheme. The members of the County Board of Health would not have undertaken such large projects unless they had been determined to enforce punctual rent payments and to take drastic measures to recover the large arrears owed on existing cottages and plots. The writer found it difficult to understand the failure of occupiers of labourers' cottages with acre plots to pay the nominal rent of a shilling a week, especially when many poor tenants in towns were charged up to five shillings a week for a single room in slum areas. In the writer's opinion, it had been high time that steps were taken to ensure justice for people in towns. The new Housing Act, if fully utilised, the writer believed, would have accomplished much good. However, there had to have been an earnest effort to pass an acceptable 'Attending Town Tenants Bill' through An Dáil, if real justice was to be achieved for tenants in towns.[150]

A few days later, in an opinion piece submitted by former Deputy (TD), Mr Timothy Quill, M.C.C., of Macroom, to the '*Southern Star*,' he addressed what he described as misunderstandings surrounding Labour support in the Macroom division, and the activities of certain cottage tenants' representatives. This piece appears to show the political tensions that sometimes arose between various political groups and associations on the topic of housing provision. Mr Quill stated that, in his view, a recent local Labour Party Conference held at the Macroom Town Hall was highly successful and well-attended, fully representing the workers of the Macroom county electoral area. He noted that he had once again been selected to contest the division on behalf of the Labour Party. In Mr Quill's opinion, the positive outcome of the conference seemed to have unsettled certain individuals who, as he put it, continued to hope that

[150] *Kerry News 21/6/1933*

workers would vote for every political party except their own. He argued that while it might be unpleasant, it was sometimes necessary to point out what he called hypocrisy, in the interest of truth and transparency, particularly regarding the concerns of workers and cottage tenants.

Mr Quill referred to a letter published in the Southern Star from Mr P. Sisk of Cork, identified as Secretary of an organisation said to be presided over by Mr Bradley. In Mr Quill's opinion, Mr Sisk appeared agitated in his correspondence with Mr J. O'Riordan, criticising the accuracy of the Star's report and denying that Mr O'Riordan intended to withdraw his candidacy. However, Mr Quill asserted that this contradicted a letter he himself had received from Mr O'Riordan at the Labour Convention, which he quoted as follows:

> *"Dear Mr Quill— I am sorry I cannot attend the meeting today, owing to my father-in-law being ill, but I hope you will come to a sensible conclusion. You will see I will be in accord with the decision of the Convention, but do not put on more than two candidates in all, including cottage tenants. — Yours faithfully, John O'Riordan."*

In Mr Quill's view, this letter supported the accuracy of the original '*Southern Star*' report. Furthermore, he claimed that at an earlier meeting of cottage tenants, Mr O'Riordan had been directed to liaise with Mr Quill and to request that he again stand in the Labour interest, assuring him of their support. Mr Quill stated that Mr O'Riordan had followed this direction. Mr Quill also addressed what he termed the "pretended worries" of certain individuals regarding the fixity of tenure for cottage tenants. He cited a specific case in September of the previous year, involving an attempt to transfer a cottage tenancy at Shanbally, Monkstown, from a grandmother to her grandson, Mr Sisk. According to Mr Quill, Mr Bradley had appeared before the Board with Mr Sisk to request the transfer, but the Parish Priest of the area objected in writing, stating that it would not be in the elderly woman's interest to be removed from her tenancy. The Board subsequently decided against the transfer, and allowed the

elderly woman to retain her home. Mr Quill used this example to criticise what he viewed as contradictory conduct by representatives of the cottage tenants' movement.

He further commented on Mr J. Lordan, described as "Secretary of Kilmichael Cottage Tenants," who Mr Quill said had resumed a sporadic interest in Labour affairs. In Mr Quill's opinion, Mr Lordan had taken to commenting, from a "dignified perch," on Labour's position regarding a proposed or alleged purchase scheme for cottages. Mr Quill accused Mr Lordan of adopting, in his words, a "Hitler blackshirt style" attitude, by claiming the scheme would go ahead "whether they like it or not."

Mr Quill took issue with what he saw as Mr Lordan's belief that Labour deputies and county councillors, elected by working men and women, had no right to oppose proposals they believed were either hypocritical or detrimental to cottage tenants. He criticised Mr Lordan for his alleged failure to support Labour candidates in the last Dáil election and suggested he focus on those he did support, whose interest in cottiers, Mr Quill implied, would likely reappear just before the next election. In his opinion, Mr Lordan had engaged in what Mr Quill called "ignorant criticism" of the Labour Party, accusing them of supporting only well-paid officials and neglecting ordinary workers — whom Mr Lordan allegedly described with derogatory terminology. Mr Quill vigorously rejected this. He asked rhetorically whether Deputy William Norton and the Labour Party had no interest in the "average working man." He pointed to their role in securing Fianna Fáil support in the previous Dáil for Labour's housing policy, which he argued was now leading to the construction of more homes for workers.

Mr Quill also cited Deputy T.J. Murphy, T.D., from Cork West, whom he praised as a "fearless champion of the poor" for challenging both Cumann na nGaedheal and Fianna Fáil governments on issues such as pensions for widows and orphans, defending workers' reputations in the Dáil, and securing grants to pay County Council workers, and restart employment schemes. Mr Quill claimed that the Irish Labour Party had consistently fought for direct labour, decent wages,

and funding for social supports like home assistance and hospital care. He highlighted a case where Mr J. Harrington, a Labour member, agreed to attend a County Council deputation to secure funding to pay workers — while, Mr Quill alleged, Mr Bradley had refused to attend the same meeting.

In Mr Quill's opinion, critics like Mr Lordan seemed disturbed by Labour's willingness to support groups such as Civic Guards, Postmen, National Teachers, and working farmers. He argued that Labour's mission was to support improvements for everyone, and resist efforts to lower living standards. Mr Quill wrote that he agreed with Mr Lordan on one point: that people "know who's who." He believed that by the time of the next County Council election, this would become even more evident. In the meantime, he asserted that the Labour Party would continue to stand firmly by its principles and ignore what he called "pin-pricks from pigmy politicians."

Mr Quill dismissed suggestions that Labour supported an undefined "purchase scheme" without scrutiny. He insisted that Labour would, as always, assess all proposals carefully and support only those deemed by the workers themselves, through their party, to be beneficial. Schemes that would offer no tangible benefits and only increase burdens, he stated, would be opposed — particularly if they emerged from a government commission, which he referred to as the "cold store of all Government difficulties." Finally, Mr Quill expressed disappointment that Mr Lordan did not address what Mr Quill considered the "sensible" demands of the Macroom Labour Convention: relief from rates on cottages, increased cottage construction (which the Board of Health had agreed to), or rate reductions similar to those already given to landowners. Mr Quill claimed that other counties were beginning to demand the same, following Macroom's lead. He ended his opinion by referring to a report given to the West Cork Board by a cottage rent collector, stating that Mr John Lordan of Clashbredane, Kilmichael — although appointed as a tenant — had not been residing in the cottage for over 12 months. Mr Quill questioned whether the so-called "cottage tenants' secretary" was merely a tenant in

name, while others in need of housing remained without homes.[151]

Remarkably, during July 1933, the '*Irish Press*' reported that large crowds of men gathered on the roadway in the County Home yard and in the passages of the institution prior to a special meeting of the Northern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health at Mallow. The meeting was convened to consider applications for cottages in the Mallow and Charleville areas. The Acting Secretary, Mr Daly, informed the meeting that there were 23 applicants for 18 cottages in the Charleville area, and 388 applicants for 76 cottages in the Mallow area. After considerable discussion, it was unanimously decided that all applications would be considered without giving preference to those who held forms of consent from farmers. Mr P. S. Murphy, T.D., opposed the proposal to prioritise voluntary cases, stating that deserving applicants should receive houses without being hindered by formalities. Following the rejection of a few unsuitable applications, it was resolved to advise all applicants, by means of posters and announcements in the press, to obtain forms of consent.[152]

By August, Mr R. Daly, M.C.C., presided over a meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health held in the Council Chamber. The meeting was convened to consider applications for cottages in the electoral divisions of the Cork Rural District, with the aim of selecting applicants most urgently in need of improved housing accommodation. The Committee followed the usual procedure of assessing and selecting the most deserving applicants to recommend to the County Board of Health. In total, there were 91 applications for 29 cottages to be erected across the following districts: Mathey, with 25 cottages, received 10 applications, of which 5 were recommended; Monkstown, with 2 cottages, had received 12 applications, with 4 recommended; Ovens, with 3 cottages, received 6 applications, with 4 recommended; Rathcooney, with 8

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[151] *Southern Star 24/6/1933*

[152] *Irish Press 4/7/1933*

cottages, had 47 applications, with 11 recommended; Riverstown, with 5 cottages, received 17 applications, with 7 recommended; and Whitechurch, with 5 cottages, received 17 applications, with 8 recommended. At Ballynaglough and Knockautota, one cottage was to be erected in each district; however, as no applications were received for either, these two cottages were included with those in more populous districts. The filing of 117 applications for 48 cottages to be erected in the Kinsale No. 2 District was also conducted, with the number eventually reduced to the 58 most deserving cases. This would conclude the business of considering applications for all cottages in the various electoral divisions within the Cork Rural District.[153]

A meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the the usual Courthouse, in early September, with Capt. Collins, H.C., presiding. The Department communicated that, with reference to previous correspondence regarding an extension of the Crosshaven water supply, the Minister had sanctioned the raising by the Cork Board of Public Health of a loan of £300 from the Local Loans Fund for the purpose of carrying out the extension. The loan was to be repayable by instalments over 25 years, with an interest rate of 5½ per cent per annum. A further letter indicated that a grant, covering a proportion of the cost and subject to a maximum contribution of £150, had been allocated to the work, provided the Local Authority met the remaining expenditure. The Acting Secretary, Mr. Callanan, had reported that the Board had already resolved to proceed with the extension, subject to receiving the grant. The Chairman remarked that it appeared necessary to advertise for a loan, to which the Secretary responded that the funds would come directly from the Local Loans Fund. Sanction was also received for the extension of a sewer from Old Ballincollig Road to Model Farm Road, under similar conditions, with a loan and grant amounting to £300 and £150 respectively. Notification was received from the Department that a grant covering a proportion of the cost, subject to a maximum of £500, had been allocated to the Ballydehob sewerage scheme; this matter was referred to the Western Committee. A similar ruling had applied to the

[153] *Evening Echo 5/8/1933*

Drinoleague sewerage scheme, where the maximum grant was set at £600. Approval was granted to raise a loan of £200 for sinking a well and erecting a pump at Ballynockery. An application from the Haig Gardens section of the British Ex-Service Tenants' Association, requesting the erection of two lights in their terrace, was referred to the Engineer. Sanction was also given for a loan of £500 to extend the Killeagh burial ground.

The County Medical Officer of Health reported on the sanitary conditions of Crosshaven. The population at the 1926 census was 737 and was tending to increase. The main part of the town lay on the slope of a hillside down to the coastline, with several dwellings on outlying sites. The water supply was provided by a pumping and gravitation scheme that had been in operation for several years and was generally satisfactory, except that certain areas, such as Templebreedy, experienced periodic shortages due to difficulties in elevation. Sewage disposal was managed by a sewer system, some parts of which were obsolete, discharging into tidal waters. Most houses were fitted with water closets, except for several smaller houses near Hayes Lane, where occupants dumped slops onto the foreshore, creating a potential health hazard. A scavenging system operated in the town and surrounding districts; however, complaints had occasionally been received regarding inefficient house refuse removal in outlying areas. Some refuse was also dumped on the foreshore, causing unsightly collections. Despite this, the main town area was generally clean, and byways and lanes were well maintained. Crosshaven was a popular seaside resort, heavily frequented by holiday-makers on weekends and served by bus. The Irish Tourist Association had raised concerns about the lack of public toilet facilities at the bus terminus. At that time, there was one public convenience on former railway property, catering only to one sex, situated on an unsuitable site, and in a dilapidated, un-clean state. The Medical Officer had recommended the provision of at least one modern convenience for both sexes, for which the necessary urban powers would need to be obtained. Attention was also called to the need for sanitary arrangements in un-sewered parts of the town. The Secretary noted that the issue had arisen from

a letter received at the last meeting of the Irish Tourist Association and that the matter was referred to the Engineer for a report. At this point, Mr. W. J. Broderick, T.D., took the chair.

Afterwards, a deputation of residents appeared before the Board to inquire about progress regarding the Dublin Hill housing scheme. The Secretary explained that the matter had been raised by the Southern Committee, proposing a scheme similar to those in operation at Kanturk and other locations. The Board had instructed the Secretary to write to the Department seeking clarification on whether the Board had the authority to erect houses other than those for agricultural labourers. No reply had yet been received.[154]

A special meeting of the South Cork Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held later that month to consider a letter from the Department of Local Government and Public Health. The letter concerned the County Council's proposal to replace the prevailing County Board of Public Health with three Boards of Health. As part of this restructuring, the County Council was to appoint two members from the Committee to serve on a Joint Committee, which would be tasked with drafting a scheme related to the proposed changes. The Minister's letter to the County Council outlining the proposal had already been published. Following discussion, Messrs. R. Daly and E. Carey were recommended for appointment to the Joint Committee. The Committee also considered several tenders received for the supply of milk to necessitous children in the Southern Area under the Free Milk Scheme. The Secretary reported that two tenders had been received for the supply of milk in Bandon town, with no tenders received for the surrounding rural district. In response to a query from Mr. Carey, the Secretary stated that both tenders for Bandon quoted a price of 1½d per pint. For the Rochestown district of Cork, only one tender had been received. The Secretary noted that Cork constituted a very large area and that tenders had not been received for most of it. Consequently, it would be necessary to arrange an alternative supply. In Kinsale, two tenders had been received

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[154] *Cork Examiner 12/9/1933*

—one at 2d and one at 1½d per pint. In the Cloyne district, one tender was submitted at 1½d per pint, and for Ballinacurra, a single tender had been received quoting 1s 4d per gallon. Mr. Carey remarked that it was probable that all those who submitted tenders would be required to supply milk, given the ongoing and anticipated shortage during the winter months. It was decided to forward all tenders received to the County Board of Health for further consideration.[155]

In October, a full meeting of the Cork County Board of Health was held at the Courthouse, chaired by Mr. W. J. Broderick, T.D. Several issues concerning public health infrastructure and housing were addressed, including deputations from local communities. A deputation from Crosshaven attended the meeting to raise concerns about their water supply and sanitation. Rev. Fr. D. M. O'Flynn, P.P., highlighted that residents were being charged a high water rate of two shillings in the pound, yet the village's sanitation services were seriously lacking. He reported that a respected medical professional had expressed concern over the risk of an epidemic in the area due to poor conditions. The County Engineer confirmed that during the summer months, particularly in July and August, there was a major increase in water demand. This resulted in significant shortages, especially at higher elevations, where some homes received water for less than an hour each day. A proposed improvement scheme was prepared, with an estimated cost of £6,760. Board member Mr. Hinchin expressed support for the scheme, noting that if the residents were willing to fund it, there was no reason to delay. In relation to public lighting in Crosshaven, the Secretary reported that the cost of a lighting scheme would be approximately £60. The Chairman suggested that they should apply for a government grant, which could potentially reduce the total cost by one-third, bringing it down to around £4,600. He expressed confidence that the Minister would approve such funding and assured the deputation that issues with village sanitation would be resolved. The deputation, which included Mr. E. O'Neill, T.D., thanked the committee and withdrew.

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[155] *Evening Echo 20/9/1933*

A deputation from the Dublin Hill Housing Committee also addressed the Board, inquiring about progress on a proposed housing scheme. They were informed that the Department had not yet sent a response to the Board's previous correspondence. The Chairman explained that the Minister had raised concerns about the cost of building houses near the city, noting that urban construction would be more expensive than in rural areas. The Department intended to prepare its own scheme for Dublin Hill and submit it directly, but nothing had yet been received. Mr. Hinchin proposed a motion to formulate a special housing scheme for the towns of Kanturk, Millstreet, and Newmarket, in line with recommendations made by Dr. Condy, the County Medical Officer of Health. The motion included a request for County Council approval to raise the necessary loan. The Secretary read a report outlining a broader housing proposal to build 200 houses in non-urban towns in the northern area. The suggested allocation was: 40 houses in Millstreet, 50 in Kanturk, 30 in Newmarket, 40 in Charleville, and 40 in Mitchelstown. At a cost of £300 per house, the total loan required would be £60,000. The proposed weekly rent for each house was set at 4 shillings. The Chairman stated that he already had sufficient knowledge of housing needs in those areas and did not require further representation from local deputations. Mr. P. Daly seconded the motion, and it was approved.

The County Engineer presented a report on the proposed Ringaskiddy water supply scheme, estimating the cost at £2,005. At the Chairman's suggestion, Captain Collins agreed to formally introduce the scheme at the next meeting. Support for the proposal was voiced by Messrs. T. Tuohy and P. O'Regan. Further, it was agreed to send Dr. Condy and the Engineer to the Northern Committee to inspect and report on the Kanturk Sewerage Scheme, as recommended by Mr. P. Coughlan, F.S.I. Following up on the minutes of the North Cork Board of Public Health, Mr. P. Daly, T.D., requested that Dr. Condy and the Engineer also examine the need for a water supply in Watergrasshill village. This request was approved.[156]

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[156] *Cork Examiner 10/10/1933*

During November, a special meeting of the Northern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health was held in Mallow to review applications for labourers' cottages to be built under the Housing Act of 1932. The meeting was chaired by Mr. J. M. O'Connor. A total of 1,785 applications had been submitted for the 285 cottages to be constructed. Mr. O'Connor noted that 21 plots of land had already been acquired for the scheme, leaving 261 plots still to be secured, either through agreement with landowners or by compulsory acquisition. He expressed a preference for proceeding by consent and suggested adjourning the meeting for two weeks to give applicants time to secure the necessary permissions. Mr. J. Barry proposed that, given the complexities involved, a local inquiry should be held in each district. Mr. P. Crowley suggested that the tenants for the cottages should be selected before proceeding further. Ultimately, the committee agreed —on a motion by Mr. Meaney, seconded by Mr. J. Buckley —that building should begin on the plots already acquired. Mr. Meaney further proposed that the committee go ahead with appointing tenants for all cottages, requesting landowner consent in those selected, and resorting to compulsory acquisition only where consent was not forthcoming. The Chairman responded that the housing scheme would need to apply across the entire region. He said it would be ideal if they could begin with voluntary agreements and move to compulsory methods later, if necessary. The proposal was adopted. The committee then turned to allocations, beginning with Charleville. Out of 22 applications in that area, 19 were approved and three were deferred to the next phase of the scheme.

Discussion next focused on the area of Fermoy, and how best to allocate the cottages. One idea was to distribute them based on the valuation of each electoral area. The Secretary explained that an area would need a fresh valuation of at least £1,680 to qualify for a cottage under this method. However, Mr. O'Connor suggested allocating the cottages by dispensary district instead, which Mr. N. Barry supported. He pointed out that there were many densely populated but low-valued districts in the west of the area that had a greater need for housing. On the motion of Mr. Crowley, seconded by Mr.

Buckley, it was unanimously agreed to proceed with allocations based on dispensary districts. The valuations of the electoral areas within each district would be considered, and any unallocated cottages could be reassigned to other areas. The committee then continued to work through the list of applications, determining how many cottages should be built in each area.[157]

A full meeting of the Cork County Board of Health took place approximately a week later in the Cork County Council Chamber, at the regular Courthouse in Cork city centre. The session was chaired by Mr. W. J. Broderick, T.D. (Chairman). Dr. Condy, the County Medical Officer of Health, presented a report on the sanitation conditions in Kanturk. He noted that, according to the 1926 census, the town had a population of 1,630. Two rivers, the Dallua and the Allua, ran through the town and joined just beyond the bridge to form a tributary of the River Blackwater. The town's water scheme, which had been in operation for several years, sourced water from a local spring. This water was purified, filtered, and gravelated, and was generally satisfactory, although occasional shortages occurred during dry weather. Most houses had water on tap. However, the sewerage system in the town was old and inadequate. It consisted of rubble sewers laid through most of the streets, all of which discharged directly into the river. In addition, numerous independent drains from houses near the riverbanks contributed to the problem. These outlets often became blocked due to a buildup of sediment and refuse. The rivers typically lacked the volume and depth necessary to flush the waste effectively, resulting in persistent complaints about offensive odours, particularly near the bridge, where stagnant and untreated sewage accumulated. Dr Condy remarked that the river and its banks were unsightly and insanitary, as the watercourse had become a dumping ground for all kinds of refuse. He expressed surprise that there had not been a higher incidence of enteric fever in the town. He also observed that the town’s streets and laneways were poorly maintained. Although a scavenging system was reportedly in place, the general appearance of the town indicated a lack of

[157] *Cork Examiner 7/11/1933*

cooperation from the public and inadequate service. He believed the amount of time dedicated to cleaning was insufficient for a town of this size and that the scavenger's pay was far too low for the scope of work required.

Dr Condy presented two potential solutions put forward by Mr Coughlan, the Engineer. The first involved constructing a concrete culvert along the riverbed above the bridge, which would collect existing sewage outlets and discharge them further downstream. This would cost an estimated £2,500 - £3,000 and would only partially resolve the problem, as it would not actually include purification. The second, more comprehensive option, was a complete new sewerage system with full purification works, which was estimated to cost between £7,000 and £8,000. He emphasised that either solution was essential to address the town's serious sanitation issues and also recommended a complete overhaul of the town's scavenging arrangements. In light of the report, Mr Hinchin proposed that the Board request a government grant. Acting on the advice of Assistant Secretary Mr Callanan, the Board agreed to forward Dr Condy's report to the Department of Local Government and request that an engineer be sent to inspect the town.

In connection with the labourers' cottage scheme under the Housing Act, the Department of Local Government had written to express its approval of the Board's inspection procedures. It stated that total engineering remuneration, including payments to additional engineers, should not exceed 2.5% of the total cost of the works under contract. An additional 10 shillings per plot would be paid for engineering services related to cottage construction, as outlined in Article 49 of the Labourers' Order, 1912. Mr R. Daly urged the Board to proceed with construction on the plots already acquired, noting that the funding was available and that there were no known obstacles. Mr Kelly confirmed that construction had already commenced in the Western area, where tenders had previously been accepted. Engineer Mr B. O'Flynn added that plans for the South Cork cottages were still awaiting official approval, and that tenant selection remained incomplete in the Northern area. The Chairman stated that the scheme should not be delayed pending tenant

selection. The Assistant Secretary explained that all sites needed to be selected in advance and included in a Provisional Order covering every cottage in the scheme. Where landowners refused to sell, compensation would be assessed by an Inspector as part of a compulsory acquisition process. The Board ultimately decided to invite tenders for the construction of cottages on all plots already acquired in both the North and South Cork areas.

On the motion of Captain Collins, the Board agreed to provide a water supply for the village of Ringaskiddy. According to the Engineer's report, two-thirds of the cost would be covered by the Cork rural district, with the remaining one-third paid by the dispensary district. Mr R. Daly recalled that the original agreement had specified equal contributions from each area. A deputation, consisting of Messrs P. O'Regan and T. Tuohy, attended the meeting to advocate for a water supply and sewerage scheme for Raffeen, Shanbally, and Ringaskiddy, as well as the improvements to the water supplies in Ballyfouloo and Ballymote. These schemes were approved.

Mr. T. Quill, M.C.C., attended the meeting to raise what he described as a matter of serious importance concerning the administration of the school medical scheme. He expressed concern that the scheme, which was intended to benefit families across the county, was not being utilised to its full potential due to recent events that had shaken public confidence. He referred to a case reported in the press and heard in the Circuit Court, where a nurse employed by the County Board of Health had been sued by a parent from the Macroom district. The child in question had suffered an eye injury, allegedly due to the nurse's negligence during treatment, when nitric acid was mistakenly poured into the child's eye. The court awarded £300 in damages to the parent. Since that incident, Mr. Quill stated, there had been widespread misunderstanding and concern, particularly in the Macroom district, where parents had become increasingly reluctant to participate in the school medical scheme. He stressed that the Board of Health needed to take definitive steps to ensure the continuation of the programme in a manner that would eliminate the risk of such incidents

recurring. Mr. Quill further noted that the individual involved in the legal action remained in the employment of the County Board of Health, which had raised additional concerns among the public. He urged that the matter be thoroughly investigated and emphasised that, if the scheme were to proceed, parents in the Macroom district required clear reassurance that such a serious mishap would not happen again. He concluded by reiterating that the County Board of Health should conduct a strict and transparent inquiry into the matter.[158]

In December 1933, a convening of the South Cork Board of Public Health (Southern Committee) occurred. Mr E. Ahern MCC was presiding. The Engineer reported that the district of Ardfoyle Villas and Crescent required proper lighting, noting that a large number of valuable houses had been built in the area in preceding years. Four lamps would be necessary. Mr C. Buckley gave notice for the next meeting. He also reported that, until recently, the Cork Corporation had maintained a public gas lamp on Magazine Road at the entrance to Horgan's Buildings. However, the City Manager had since stated that, as the area lay outside the borough boundary, the lighting of the lamp would be discontinued. It would therefore be necessary to replace it with an electric lamp. He also noted that an additional lamp was badly needed at Victoria Cross. A redundant lamp at Gaol Cross, where the city and county boundaries met (as they did in 1933), could be relocated to this position, thereby incurring no additional annual cost. The Committee agreed to provide the necessary lighting for the areas discussed.

The Engineer reported that an application had been made to deepen the sewer at Model Farm Road from 6 to 16 feet to render land on the north side of the road suitable for building. The cost would be £130, and the sewer would accommodate approximately 20 houses. The landowners had guaranteed to cover the cost should the Board of Health refuse the expenditure. When in Dublin, the Engineer had raised the matter with the Department, who expressed willingness to sanction the extra cost. Mr C. Buckley gave notice on the

[158] *Cork Examiner 14/11/1933*

matter. In connection with the Watergrasshill water supply, the Engineer reported that he had inspected the proposed source, which was badly needed. The total cost was estimated at £2,250. If a one-third government grant were obtained, the Southern Committee's share would be £750—an equitable proportion. As the system would require pumping, an annual maintenance charge would apply. The Engineer also reported that the owner of a plot at Highfield West intended to erect at least four houses. As there was no sewer on the road, a new sewer would need to be laid to connect to the existing one on College Road. The estimated cost was £90. Mr C. Buckley gave notice of motion on the matter. In the absence of Mr R. Daly, Mr Corry, T.D., moved:

(a) That an additional water fountain be provided at Carrigtwohill.
(b) That a water supply be provided for Watergrasshill, jointly with the Northern Committee of the County Board of Health, based on the joint reports of both Engineers.

The estimated cost was £2,250. The motion, seconded by Mr Carey, was agreed.

Mr J. L. Keane, solicitor, Youghal, wrote on behalf of Patrick Cashman, a labourer from Clonpriest, who had been married for two years, and had been unable to secure a home. His father, Michael Cashman, had been the nominal tenant of a labourer's cottage for seven years but had only lived in it on two occasions. Patrick Cashman understood that the Board had made an order on 2 October granting him the vacant cottage. The Secretary confirmed that an order had been made to secure possession of the cottage, but proceedings had been deferred as the elder Cashman had promised to reside there in future. Mr Keane had been informed of this. However, he later wrote again to state that Patrick Cashman and his wife were at that time living in an outhouse attached to the cottage his father was meant to occupy. Patrick had applied for another cottage on Mr R. Motherway's lands, but his application had been rejected on the grounds that the prevailing cottage was vacant. On Mr Carey's suggestion, the matter was referred to the rent collector, Mr J. Condon. On the motion of Mr C. Buckley, seconded by Mr Corry, it was

decided to erect 19 electric lamps at Crosshaven at a cost of 13 shillings for the extension of the main and £60 per year for maintenance. The area of charge would be Templebreedy B. Division. Mr C. Buckley also moved that the sewer at Blackrock be extended to drain two houses on Convent Road, at an estimated cost of £50. He further proposed that the main sewer at Glashaboy be extended to service seven existing houses on the road, as well as several new houses likely to be built soon. The estimated cost was £240, and a loan for the amount would be applied for. The area of charge would be the Rural District of Cork. Mr P. Crowley seconded. Mr Corry argued that providing sewers in these areas would place a considerable burden on rural ratepayers. It would cost £60 per house to drain the seven houses mentioned. He proposed that the motions be deferred for one month and suggested imposing a drainage charge. Mr M. Buckley seconded. On a division, the amendment was defeated 5 to 3. The original motion was passed, and it was decided to consult the Board's Law Adviser on the Committee's authority to impose a sewer rate. The setting of the areas of charge was referred to the County Board of Health. The Board accepted the lowest of four tenders received, being £168 10s from Mr J. O'Driscoll, Bandon - for the laying of a sewer at Bandon.

On the motion of Mr P. Crowley, seconded by Mr C. Buckley, the Board agreed to erect five electric lamps at Enniskeane, at a cost of £4 10s for extension of mains, and £20 per year for maintenance. The area of charge would be Teadies Upper, Teadies Lower, Castlelands, and Derrygra townlands. On a further motion by Mr Crowley, seconded again by Mr Buckley, the Engineer was directed to report on the necessity of sinking a well and installing a pump at Rathroe, Ballinhassig.

On the motion of Mr Carey, seconded by the Chairman (Mr Ahern), the Board agreed to erect five electric lamps at Ballinacurra village at a cost of £16 10s for extension of mains, and six lamps at Cloyne at a cost of £8 5s. In each case, the annual maintenance charge would be £20. On another motion by Mr Carey, also seconded by the Chairman, the Board agreed to erect a storage tank to capture overflow

water from Ballycotton reservoir for sewerage and domestic purposes. The Engineer was instructed to report on the proposal. Mr P. Crowley also noted that considerable unrest existed among the applicants already selected for the new cottage scheme. They believed that other applications might still be considered. He invited the Committee to give its views, as he had been approached by several concerned individuals. The Chairman affirmed that those applicants already selected would be the future tenants of the new cottages.[159]

In January 1934, at a special meeting of the Cork County Board of Health (the first of that year), the Chairman, Mr W. J. Broderick, presided. Documented by the '*Evening Echo*,' the estimates for the year ending 31 March 1933, as submitted by the Secretary, Mr Owen Callanan, were as follows:

- Total amount of estimates submitted: £70,384
- Amount of demand for the prevailing year (1932–33): £61,869
- Net increase over the amount demanded for the prevailing year: £8,515.

Additionally, estimates Submitted by Committees, etc included:

[159] *Cork Examiner 5/12/1933*

Committee and Miscellaneous	1931–32 (£)	1932–33 (£)
Northern Committee	22,542	21,470
Southern Committee	33,911	29,055
Western Committee	10,864	9,371
County Medical Officer of Health	2,603	2,621
Secretary’s General Expenses	743	773

This was complemented by:

- Gross Requirements: £70,663 (1931–32) → £63,293 (1932–33)
- Less sundry allowances for balances: £279 (1931–32) → £1,424 (1932–33)
- Net Requirements: £70,384 (1931–32) → £61,869 (1932–33).

Lastly, the total amount required for special expenses in the three areas, including repayment of loans and maintenance of water supplies and sewerage schemes, was as follows:

Area	1931–32 (£)	1932–33 (£)
Northern Area	8,084	8,084
Southern Area	12,819	10,514
Western Area	2,521	2,316

Additionally, it was reported that the total sum required for expenditure on General Health District Charges during the ensuing year was £41,605. Of this, £29,764 was under Labourers’ Acts Expenses, including a sum of £2,800 for payment of interest on the loans for the erection of new cottages. A sum of £11,905, being the total of debit balances remaining on 31 March 1933, and county expenses across the

four Labourers' Acts Provisions, was charged to the account for General Health District Charges. In accordance with the terms of the Housing (Financial and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1932, corresponding credit balances amounting to £2,262 remaining on several rural district separate charge operations were transferred to the separate charge accounts for other special expenses maintained in their respective areas. In total, the joint charges were comprised of the following:

- Separate Charges: £21,637
- Health District Charges: £47,013
- Joint District Charges: £1,731

A further statement was set out on balances in favour of or against each rural district in the county on March 31st, 1933, under the Labourers' Acts. The details were as follows:

North Cork Board of Public Health

District	Balance in Favour	Balance Against
Charleville	£371 3s 9d	—
Fermoy	—	£2,609 3s 6d
Kanturk	—	£4,229 8s 6d
Mallow	—	£55 18s 8d
Millstreet	—	£1,506 19s 9d
Mitchelstown	—	£759 19s 1d

South Cork Board of Public Health

District	Balance in Favour	Balance Against
Bandon	—	£369 13s 9d
Cork City	—	£916 14s 0d
Kinsale	£1,010 7s 5d	—
Macroom	—	£545 2s 1d
Midleton	—	£694 6s 3d
Youghal	—	£136 17s 8d

West Cork Board of Public Health

District	Balance in Favour	Balance Against
Bantry	£141 15s 8d	—
Castletown	£31 3s 10d	—
Clonakilty	£569 5s 9d	—
Dunmanway	—	£50 17s 3d
Schull	£54 18s 8d	—
Skibbereen	£83 8s 2d	—

The Chairman pointed out that by receiving or adjusting credit and debit balances for the different rural districts, a clearer accounting method for the Labourers Acts could be achieved. A lengthy discussion followed concerning whether the deficits should be levelled by local demand or general charges. The Northern Committee had not included the debit balance in their demand and were willing to have it levied if allowed. The Board eventually decided to make no provision for debit balances under the Labourers Acts in the estimate.

Mr O'Donovan proposed legislation to create a clearer and more unified charging policy for the whole county, especially for new cottage schemes. Mr Kelly seconded this. After debate, the motion was passed. The Board also discussed the sewerage charges and their impact, ultimately agreeing that rates would not be uniform across the entire county unless legislation was passed to authorise such changes. A proposal to increase the amount charged to Southern and Western Roads for cottage repairs was withdrawn after the Secretary clarified it was unnecessary.

Mr Daly moved that the rent for the first year of new cottages be waived. Mr O'Donovan seconded. The motion was passed. The estimated total provision of £2,426 was approved for cottage repairs. The total estimate for the year was approved as submitted, standing at £67,774, and would be forwarded to the Minister.[160]

In March 1934, the '*Irish Press*' reported that at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health yesterday, Dr. Condy, County Medical Officer of Health, reported on infectious disease notifications for the month of February. A total of 39 cases of scarlet fever were notified, of which 25 occurred in the Southern area. Of the nine cases reported in the Western area, eight were from a single family. In that instance, no medical practitioner was called until the convalescent stage had been reached. Dr Condy highlighted that the continued failure of parents to seek medical assistance remained the chief cause for the prevalence of this disease. In addition, there were twelve cases of diphtheria, of which two proved fatal. Both fatal cases had not previously received immunisation treatment.[161]

In June, as reported by the '*Cork Examiner*,' at a special meeting of the Southern Committee of the Cork County Board of Health, convened to consider, among other matters, a letter from the Department of Local Government, was called at the city centre courthouse in Washington St.. The

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[160] *Evening Echo 19/1/1934*

[161] *Irish Press 13/3/1934*

letter had directed the committee to dispense with the services of eight rent collectors, in whose districts the arrears of rent on certain cottages exceeded £2. However, the only member present was Mr E. Carey, M.C.C., and in the absence of a quorum, the meeting fell through.[162]

On a more sombre note, it was also reported by the '*Cork Examiner*' during August 1934 that Mr. W.H. Spiller, Secretary of the West Cork Board of Public Assistance and the West Cork Board of Public Health, had retired after a lengthy 58 years of local government service.[163]

In early September 1934, a meeting of the South Kilmurry branch of the Cottage Tenants' Association was held, with a good attendance of members. Mr W. Brady, Chairman of the branch, presided. When the general business had been concluded, the Secretary referred to the necessity of drawing the Government's attention to the delay in bringing forward the Cottage Purchase Bill. The Secretary was accordingly directed to bring the matter before the Minister for Local Government and to urge him to have the Bill prepared as soon as possible and to introduce it in the Dáil upon its reassembly. It was also decided to call the attention of the Cork County Board of Health to the scarcity of houses in the district, and to request that they proceed with building houses on the plots already in their possession, as there were many applicants in urgent need of accommodation.[164]

The following week, the '*Cork Examiner*' briefly reported that the opening of a proposed new fever hospital for Cork City was being considered by the Cork County Board of Public Health.[165]

At the beginning of October, the inquiry on oath into the application of the Cork County Board of Health for

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[162] *Cork Examiner 19/6/1934*

[163] *Cork Examiner 30/8/1934*

[164] *Cork Examiner 4/9/1934*

[165] *Cork Examiner 11/9/1934*

confirmation by the Minister for Local Government of orders made under the Labourers' Acts—authorising the compulsory acquisition of land in the Cork rural district for the erection of 175 labourers' cottages—was resumed on Saturday in the Boardroom of County Hall, Cork, by Mr. Seamus Murphy, one of the Department's Housing Inspectors. Mr. George Daly, B.L. (instructed by Mr. Gerald F. O'Flynn, solicitor) appeared on behalf of the Cork County Board of Health. Of the 175 representations dealt with:

- 23 were from the Blackrock Electoral Division
- 8 from Ballincollig
- 3 from Ballygarvan
- 10 from Bishopstown
- 2 from Blackpool
- 12 from Blarney
- 10 from Caherlag
- 8 from Carrigaline
- 5 from Carrigrohane Beg
- 9 from Cobh
- and 9 from Douglas.

At the conclusion of the inquiry, a vote of thanks to the inspector was proposed by Mr. Bradley, M.C.C., seconded by Mr. Martin J. Corry, T.D., and supported by Mr. C. Buckley, M.C.C., and Mr. Daly, T.D. Mr. Buckley said it was regrettable that all of the applicants—over 1,100—had not been given the opportunity to attend the inquiry, as he had great admiration for the manner in which it had been conducted. He was certain that if the claims of those thousand applicants had been examined during the inquiry itself, rather than by the Board of Health (who had done their best under extraordinary disadvantages), at least 700 would have been approved. The inspector, having returned thanks, suggested that in any particular case where a grievance existed, the best course of action would be to write directly to the Minister for Local Government.[166]

Mr. John M. O'Connor, M.C.C., Chairman, presided at a meeting of the Cork County Board of Health held later that

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[166] *Cork Examiner 1/10/1934*

month, in the Cork County Council Chamber, Washington St. Courthouse, Cork city centre. At the outset, Mr. Barrett inquired whether veterinary surgeons had been appointed to each former rural district under the Sanitary (Veterinary Inspectors) Order, 1909. The Assistant Secretary confirmed that veterinary surgeons had been appointed in every rural district. Mr. Barrett asked if lay dairy inspectors had also been appointed under the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order, 1908. The Assistant Secretary confirmed this and said their duties included inspecting dairies and cowsheds. Mr. Barrett questioned the duties of the veterinary surgeons and suggested there might be duplication of work between them and the lay inspectors. He contended that, according to the Order, veterinary inspectors had a defined role that seemed to leave nothing for lay inspectors to do. The Chairman responded that such matters required notice and would be addressed at the next meeting. Mr. Barrett added that medical officers appeared to be duplicating the same tasks as well. He believed this redundancy required investigation. The Chairman asked whether the lay inspectors were appointed before the passing of the Act. The Assistant Secretary believed they had been. Mr. Barrett reiterated that both lay inspectors and veterinary surgeons were doing the same work and this was an issue that needed to be resolved. It was agreed to defer further discussion until Dr. Condy, County Medical Officer, could be consulted. Later, Mr. Barrett reported he had spoken with Dr. Condy, who confirmed there was not only overlapping but actual duplication of duties. There were 11 or 12 laymen employed, carrying out the same work as the veterinary inspectors. Mr. Barrett suggested that the Board should clearly define the roles of each category of officer. The Chairman recommended Mr. Barrett give notice of motion for the next meeting, which he did.

The Assistant Secretary read a letter from the Department of Local Government and Public Health in response to a resolution passed at the last meeting of the County Council. The resolution pertained to the payment of expenses to new and former members of the County Council and Board of Health, contingent on them having attended three-fourths of their meetings. The Department's letter stated that there was no statutory authority for such a payment and that at least

75% of meetings must have been attended per half-year. The Minister could not waive this requirement. Mr. P. Daly argued this was unfair to retired members who had met the attendance criteria. The Chairman replied that legal constraints prevented payment. Mr. Carey exclaimed, "It's not laws we want, it's common sense." On the motion of Mr. Carey, seconded by Mr. Crowley, it was decided to approve the payments, subject to Ministerial sanction.

Regarding the Grange and Johnstown Water Supply, Mr. P. Daly, T.D., proposed that the licence granted by the Minister for Finance be accepted and that tenders be immediately invited for the work. This would help reduce unemployment in the Kilworth and Glanworth districts. The motion, seconded by Mr. Carey, was unanimously approved. A letter from the Minister for Local Government and Public Health confirmed a £500 grant (of the estimated £1,200 total cost) towards the Ballingeary sewerage scheme, conditional upon the Board meeting the remainder of the cost. Mr. Hyde suggested the scheme be carried out. The Chairman agreed, noting the availability of water and the need to connect all properties. On the motion of Mr. Daly, seconded by Mr. Hyde, the Board decided to proceed with the scheme. For the Blarney sewerage scheme, The Engineer, Mr. O'Flynn, said the estimated cost would be £4,000, with £150 in annual upkeep. He had earlier reported that the scheme faced multiple difficulties, particularly in locating suitable purification sites. Two proposed sites posed challenges:

- One behind Mahony's Mill, which would discharge into the river upstream of Blarney Castle
- Another in Corcoran's Inch, both of which would detract from the scenic value of the castle grounds.

Dr. Condy had previously opined that a drainage scheme was not essential, given the existing domestic scavenging system and that many homes lacked yards, making sanitary facilities difficult to implement. Mr. Walsh stressed the importance of proceeding, stating it had already been considered by the old Board. It was decided to apply for a 50% relief grant from the Department to proceed with the scheme.

A circular from the Department of Local Government and Public Health criticised the neglected condition of many graveyards, calling several of them over-grown, untidy and disrespectful. The Minister urged systematic clean-up efforts, suggesting cooperation between Sanitary Authorities and local clergy, including convening meetings of grave owners. Mr. Daly said local communities were unlikely to act. The Chairman and several members agreed that caretakers were underpaid, some earning as little as 30 shillings a year. Mr. Carey pointed out that the Minister wished for improvements without allowing spending from local rates. The utilisation of voluntary labour was being suggested instead. Mr. D. O'Callaghan noted prior efforts in West Cork had failed due to objections from grave owners regarding old stones. Mr. Hyde proposed appointing dedicated caretakers, funded via a parish levy. The Chairman replied this was not legally feasible. Mr. Barrett suggested classifying graveyards by condition and addressing the worst first. Mr. Carey proposed that sanitary officers inspect and report on graveyards in their areas. The Secretary was instructed to:

- Request graveyard reports from the Engineers
- Forward the Minister's circular to all parish priests and rectors in the county.

A letter from the Minister for Local Government and Public Health approved the promotion of Mr. James O'Mahony, Assistant Secretary of the West Cork Committee of Public Health, to Secretary, following the resignation of Mr. W. H. Spiller. Mr. Kelly congratulated Mr. O'Mahony and expressed appreciation to the Minister, stating, "If any official in the Free State deserved promotion, Mr. O'Mahony did."[167]

At a meeting of the South Cork Board of Public Health, held in the Courthouse, Cork, Mr. R. Daly presided over discussions on a variety of local health and infrastructure matters. The issue of the Ringaskiddy water supply was addressed first. Due to a dispute concerning the ownership of the land originally intended for filter beds and intake works,

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[167] *Cork Examiner 9/10/1934*

alternative arrangements had to be made. A neighbouring plot was secured, and an agreement was reached with the landowner to purchase the site, including way-leave rights, for £20. The Board agreed to redeem the annuity and cover legal expenses. The pipeline, which traversed the lands of Morgan Flynn in Shanbally, also became a matter of contention, as negotiations over way-leave payments failed. Consequently, Flynn was served with a statutory notice.

In Castlemartyr, ongoing drainage works necessitated the rerouting of a water main that previously ran directly through an inspection manhole. This work incurred a cost of £9 11s. 11d. As maintenance of the infrastructure would require oversight, a caretaker's appointment was proposed, with a weekly salary of 2s. 6d. The committee decided to advertise the position at the suggested wage. The water supply in Carriganimma was also reviewed. The committee noted that if the existing spring were acquired, it should be enclosed, and a pipe laid to the village. A concrete tank and pump would also need to be installed. The estimated cost for this project stood at approximately £150. The report was approved, and Mr. Lucey issued notice of motion to facilitate the required expenditure. Lower Aghada and Farside were slated for road surfacing works using steam-rollers, prompting an assessment of their drainage systems. Estimates for installing proper drainage came to £700 for Lower Aghada and £930 for Farside. It was observed that neither village benefitted from a gravitation water supply. Mr. Brasier mentioned that a privately constructed drainage system already existed, though it would likely not withstand the steam-rolling. He inquired whether the system could be preserved. The Engineer acknowledged the issue, explaining that since the system was privately owned, complications arose. Nevertheless, he committed to consulting with the County Surveyor to ensure the existing drainage pipes were protected.

Attention then turned to the water supply in Upper Whitegate. Although the hydraulic ram system used to pump water remained in good condition, the concrete drive tank required replacement. Moreover, a section of the supply—around 40 yards—was exposed to potential contamination

from cattle. The Engineer proposed installing a cast-iron pipe along this stretch and building a small collecting tank. The estimated cost totalled £31, and Mr. Brasier gave notice of motion accordingly. Plans for the construction of a public convenience in Ballycotton were also presented. The estimated cost stood at £240. However, the Engineer cautioned that such a project could not proceed without the acquisition of urban powers. Mr. Brasier and Mr. Carey supported the proposal, and the former committed to giving notice of motion at the next meeting.

The committee reviewed proposals for public lighting in various locations. In Innishannon, five lamps were deemed necessary. The Electricity Supply Board estimated the cost for extending the mains at £104, with an annual upkeep of £4 per lamp. It was resolved to inform residents of the projected costs and the area to be charged. The cost of lighting along Model Farm Road up to Gait's Lane was estimated at £167 12s. 3d. with five lamps requiring an annual maintenance fee of £4 6s. 6d. per lamp. Similarly, in Hartland's Avenue, the wiring extension was expected to cost £3 7s. 1d., and two lamps were proposed, each with an annual cost of £4 6s. Mr. C. Buckley gave notice of motion for the execution of both lighting projects. Concerning the Railway Cottages in Kilbarry, the provision of water supply and drainage required the extension of Corporation-owned sewer and water mains. The Corporation had granted permission on the condition that a septic tank be installed and that the system serve only the 20 houses concerned. A request for permission to place the septic tank on railway-owned land had been submitted. The matter was deferred pending another report from the Engineer. The Belgooly water supply was also assessed. Due to the impracticality of a gravitation system, the Engineer suggested that a reliable water source could be achieved by sinking a pump in a suitable location within the village. The estimated cost for this work was £150. Mr. O'Sullivan indicated his intention to submit the necessary motion.

In line with the committee's remit, the Engineer listed the towns and villages in the southern area where public conveniences might soon be required. These included Ballycotton, Blarney, Blackrock, Crosshaven, Douglas, East

Ferry, Lower Aghada, and Ballinacurra. The Engineer was requested to prepare cost estimates for these locations. Repairs to the boundary wall of the cemetery at Ballinore (Cobh) were also discussed, prompted by representations from Mr. O'Halloran, M.C.C. He emphasised the historical significance of the cemetery, noting that it was the final resting place of the Most Rev. Dr. McKenna, the first Catholic Bishop of Cloyne following the Relief Act, and of Rev. Fr. Harrington, one-time professor at Ballybrassil seminary and tutor to Daniel O'Connell. Many other prominent Irishmen were buried there. Mr. O'Halloran added that trees planted before Catholic Emancipation had spread their roots widely, damaging the site. Residents and clergy alike supported restoration efforts. The Engineer agreed to visit the graveyard with Mr. O'Halloran and provide a report to the committee.

Finally, the Committee considered a letter from the Minister for Local Government and Public Health dated 31st May 1931, which instructed the dismissal of certain rent collectors who had allowed arrears to accumulate. The Secretary reminded the Committee that it had previously chosen to postpone action on the Minister's letter until the half-year ended 30th September. He presented the latest rent collection figures, noting that total arrears across 3,662 occupied cottages had decreased to £7,133 7s. 1d., down from £7,238 8s. 3d. at the end of March. Among the collectors specifically named by the Minister, three had reduced their arrears, while others had seen them increase. Mr. Brasier defended the collectors, stating that they regularly submitted reports and were doing their utmost to collect rents, often visiting households where payment was impossible due to poverty. Many tenants were reliant on home or unemployment assistance and had not paid rent in years. He questioned what the Minister proposed to do with such destitute tenants and asserted that dismissing collectors would be unfair under such circumstances. The Chairman concurred, expressing that the collectors were indeed doing their best and that the Minister's directive lacked any constructive alternative. Mr. Lucey suggested deferring action until 31st March of the following year, by which time, if a notable improvement was not achieved, some collectors could then be suspended. The

Chairman concluded by stating that it was unclear what more could be expected from the prevailing collectors, when compared to their predecessors.[168]

Later that month, P. Daly, T.D., presided as chairman over a meeting of the North Cork Board of Public Health, held at the County Home in Mallow. One of the key matters discussed was the provision of fire escapes and hoses for various towns in the district. Mr. O'Connor, in proposing the procurement of such equipment, noted that there had once been a fire escape in Kanturk, but it had since rotted away. Mr. Corkery added that Millstreet had no hoses at all, though it did possess ladders and other equipment. There had been numerous complaints, especially following a large fire in the town some time prior. Mr. O'Connor further observed that there had been three or four fires in Kanturk, which underscored the urgency of the matter. Mr. Keane inquired whether fire appliances in the towns were tested regularly. The Secretary responded that they were meant to be, and in Mitchelstown, for example, a part-time curator was responsible for testing the equipment. Mr. Keane suggested the hoses be tested by using them to clean the town square after the monthly fairs. The Secretary countered that such work was outside the curator's limited remit. It was agreed that the necessary fire hoses would be applied for, and the Engineer was instructed to include in his estimates the cost of four fire escapes for the main towns.

In response to a request from the County Board of Health, the Committee affirmed that proposed sanitary conveniences should be located within the usual sanitary charge areas. A letter from Mr. E. Wall, Secretary of the Mitchelstown branch of the I.T. and G.W.U., highlighted the "appalling conditions" in the town and its district. He reported that boys and girls were occupying the same apartments and stressed the urgent need for an extensive housing scheme in the area. Other concerns raised included the need for a public lavatory, the sinking of a pump at Carrigane, and repairs to several pumps. One particularly dire report stated that, according to local tradition, the Ballykearney pump was home to a

[168] *Cork Examiner 6/11/1934*

number of dogs. The Chairman assured those present that the Board was fulfilling its duties in terms of housing and public conveniences. Mr. O'Connor stated emphatically that the Board had not waited for such a letter before acting. The letter was simply marked as read.

The Committee resolved to seek a further six-month extension for the employment of Mr. Michael Daly (junior) on the clerical staff. Mr. Crowley suggested making the position permanent, as it would be more satisfactory than continuing on a month-to-month basis. Mr. O'Connor pointed out that a new Board might be in place after six months, at which time the issue could be reviewed.

The condition of numerous graveyards in North Cork was detailed in a comprehensive report from the Engineer. Cemeteries were categorised as "good," "fair," "bad," or "congested." Mr. Crowley remarked that Abbeyswell and Clonmeen graveyards resembled "an Indian jungle more than graveyards." Regarding Churchtown Cemetery, Mr. Dudley, solicitor, reported seeing bottles and rubbish discarded there, and chickens using it as common ground. Mr. Daly called the condition scandalous, stating it was the worst cemetery he had ever visited. The Secretary suggested obtaining a special report on Churchtown from the Engineer, which was agreed upon. A letter from Rev. Mr. A.E. Clarke, Rector of Castlelyons, described the same graveyard in even starker terms: "I have travelled a good deal in my time, and I have never seen worse, not even in the wilds of Africa." Templemary Cemetery was said to be in shocking condition. Mr. O'Connor noted that due to the rocky terrain, there was hardly enough soil to cover the coffins. The question arose as to what the Committee could do to remedy such issues. The Secretary relayed that clergy had suggested the Board take over the vested graveyards, though this was acknowledged as a substantial undertaking. The Church body owned few graveyards and was believed to have the means to maintain them. Cullen cemetery was also identified as being in very bad condition. The Committee requested special reports from the Engineer on the cemeteries at Churchtown, Cullen, and Templemary. Mr. O'Connor cautioned that reports were of little use without action, and accused the Board of merely

shelving the issue. The Chairman said the Board ought at least to put its own house in order. Mr. O'Connor proposed enlisting the unemployed to work under the supervision of engineers or parish priests to maintain the graveyards. The Chairman rejected this as unfeasible and attributed the state of the graveyards to the meagre salaries paid to caretakers. Mr. O'Connor added that the caretakers were only required to cut grass twice a year, yet often failed to do even that. The Secretary proposed a revision of caretakers' salaries. On Mr. O'Connor's motion, it was agreed to request the Engineer to provide a report on appropriate salary levels, including the usual occupations of caretakers. The Engineer was also asked to undertake necessary repairs to gates and fences.

Correspondence from the Ministry regarding the free milk scheme called for stricter enforcement of its conditions and requested information on complaints about a contractor supplying dirty milk. The Secretary explained that no action had been taken as the relevant contract expired in September. Turning to water schemes, the Committee reviewed the proposal for Bottle Hill (Mallow), estimated by the Engineer at £1,054. The scheme aimed to serve 60 to 74 dwellings, mostly cottages. Mr. Buckley proposed, and Mr. Keane seconded, adoption of the scheme subject to the securing of a suitable government grant. Mr. Crowley objected to the rate burden such schemes imposed, while Mr. Buckley defended his position, saying this was his first application and not responsible for rising rates. The motion was passed. A separate water supply scheme for Doneraile, estimated between £2,000 and £3,000, was also considered. The Secretary noted an application had already been sent to the Minister seeking permission to tap the old Ballyleary military water supply. The Chairman agreed to pursue the matter further with the Department. Mr. O'Connor suggested that local residents be asked to provide written guarantees to pay rates. Mr. P. Howell, a resident, was present and agreed to seek these guarantees, noting that people were willing to pay reasonable rents. Other proposals called for reports from the Engineer and County M.O.H. regarding the extension of the Kanturk water supply to Mill Road, improvements at Skahaane and Watergrasahill, and various water needs at Knockacullen, Tineglass, and Gortroe schools. The

possibility of extending Newmarket's water supply to Kanturk to supplement its prevailing system was also to be examined. Mr. Crowley commented that Kanturk, as the capital of North Cork, and with a growing population, deserved an adequate water supply.

Notices of motion were passed appointing new tenants to cottages in place of relatives. Mr. J. Daly moved to strike off nearly £70 in arrears from four new cottages in the Charleville district, where tenants had been evicted. He explained that the tenants had been advised to withhold payment in hopes of a rent reduction. As a result, no rent had been paid during their six months of occupancy. When eviction came, they could not afford the £10–£12 in arrears. Mr. O'Connor reminded the Board that the agreed rent of 5s. per week was already a reduction from the original 8s. 9d. required to avoid a loss to ratepayers. The Chairman asked Mr. Daly if the new tenants would pay rent if re-instated. Mr. Daly stated that one of the applicants was the son of a former tenant who had since died. Concerns were raised about the Board's financial accountability. The Secretary noted that the Charleville scheme had already cost £500 and suggested the arrears be struck off with the Minister's sanction. New tenants would also require ministerial approval. Mr. Daly added that since the evictions in May, no new applicants had come forward due to the accumulated arrears. The Board agreed to strike off the arrears, pending the Minister's sanction. Mr. Keane, while not advocating non-payment, stressed the need for collectors to collect rents monthly to ease tenants' burdens. The Chairman agreed, saying monthly visits would allow tenants to settle arrears without court costs. The Secretary and Solicitor confirmed that where tenants made genuine offers, leniency was shown. In the Kanturk area, the average arrears per cottage stood at just 4s. 8d.; in Fermoy, 5s.; but in Mitchelstown, it reached nearly £1 per cottage. At Mr. Keane's request, the Solicitor agreed to defer legal action until the next meeting. The Mallow collector reported that since the beet factory had opened, arrears had dropped by £10, and further reductions were

expected once County Council workers received their wages.[169]

As reported by the '*Southern Star*' at the end of December 1934, at a meeting of the Macroom Urban District Council, Mr. E. T. Neville, Chairman, presided. Mr. Dan Corkery, T.D., was also in attendance. Mr. J. Looney, who had submitted a notice of motion seeking the appointment of a deputation from the Council to negotiate with Mr. J. Murray for the potential purchase of a field at Kilnagurteeny for housing under the Working Classes Acts, indicated that it might not be necessary to acquire the field after all. He stated that until a decision had been received from the Minister for Local Government regarding the temporary occupation of vacant condemned houses by those being removed from other condemned dwellings, he would refrain from moving the resolution. If necessary, he would later submit a fresh notice of motion.

Correspondence was read from the Town Clerks of Fermoy, Youghal, Passage West, and Killarney, each providing information about the systems they had adopted for cleaning their main water supply pipes and removing incrustations. Mr. O'Connor remarked that in one instance, the cost had amounted to £700, a figure the Council could not afford at the time. He believed that laying a new main would be just as economical and a more beneficial investment in the long term. He noted that no action could be taken before the spring, and that once the new houses were constructed, an improved water supply would be necessary. The Council, therefore, decided to adjourn the matter for the time being. On the motion of Mr. Murphy, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, the Council extended its thanks to the Town Clerks who had provided such valuable information. The matter of immunisation against diphtheria, raised by a communication from the Cork County Board of Health, sparked a lengthy discussion. It was ultimately resolved to seek the opinion of the Urban District Medical Officer of Health regarding the advisability of adopting such a scheme. Mr. O'Connor expressed his belief that the disease had been brought to

[169] *Cork Examiner 27/11/1934*

Macroom from Cork City, citing a case in which a child was thought to have carried it from the city. He also lamented the failure to report local cases, considering it a serious oversight. Mr. O'Keeffe stressed the gravity of managing such cases within private homes, especially when hospital facilities were available for treatment and isolation. Mr. O'Connor further criticised the temporary closure of the local fever hospital by the Board of Health, which he claimed had cost lives. He noted that patients were now being sent from Cork City, to Macroom instead. The Minister for Local Government had written to the Council stating that he would raise no objection to the acquisition of a 4½-acre building site on the lands of Mr. James Twomey, known as the "Pigeon Fields," at a price of £125 per acre, plus redemption of the land purchase annuity. The Council passed a resolution instructing its solicitor to take the necessary steps to effect the land transfer.

The Council also turned its attention to the newly completed housing. It was decided to invite the Very Rev. Canon Barrett to bless the twenty new houses which were ready for letting. At that time, only ten tenants were legally eligible for occupation. In the remaining cases, the owners of the condemned houses had not yet provided the necessary undertakings required under the governing order. Mr. Creed, solicitor, appeared on behalf of three owners and noted that several individuals had applied to move into the houses. He suggested that, with some basic repairs, the condemned houses could be made suitable for single men or small families, and proposed they be let on a temporary basis until permanent housing became available. He emphasised the owners' willingness to cooperate fully with the Council. Mr. Murphy, however, pointed out that if Mr. Creed's suggestion were implemented, the Council would risk losing the full State subsidy available for each new house occupied by a tenant from a condemned dwelling, if that dwelling were to be let again. After further discussion, it was agreed that the Council's solicitor should confer with Mr. Creed to examine the various legal ramifications. The Urban Council proceeded to appoint twenty tenants from a pool of twenty-one approved applicants for the new houses. Mr. Corkery moved that the ten tenants who were already legally eligible

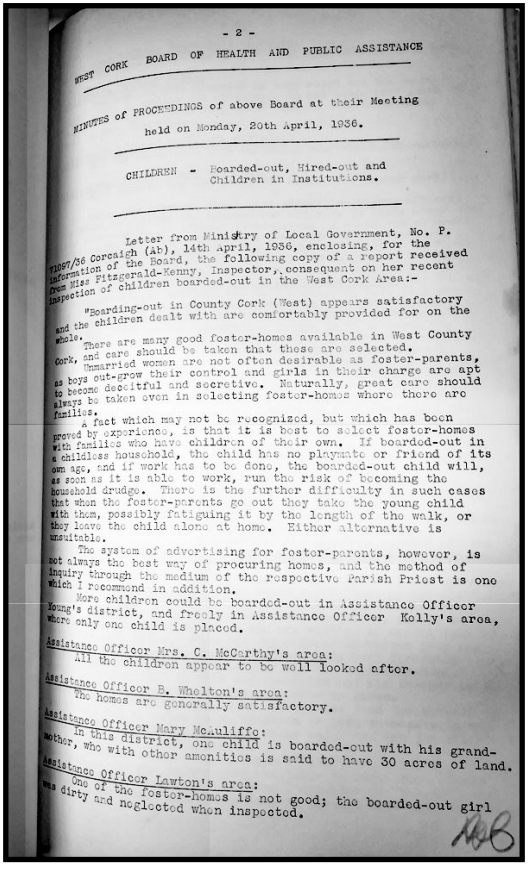
be allowed to take immediate possession. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. Mr. Looney suggested that in order to eliminate the one surplus applicant, the Council should apply the standard test—allocating homes based on the size of the applicant's family, giving preference to larger households.[170]

[170] *Southern Star 29/12/1934*

Mr. W. H. Spiller, Secretary West Cork Board of Assistance and of West Cork Committee of Cork County Board of Health, who has retired after the long service of 58 years.
("Examiner" Photo).

The regional boards of public health and public assistance within the counties of the Irish Free State were administered by local government veterans, such as W.H. Spiller.

(Source: 'Cork Examiner' 30/8/1934)



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WEST CORK BOARD OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

MINUTES of PROCEEDINGS of above Board at their Meeting held on Monday, 20th April, 1936.

CHILDREN - Boarded-out, Hired-out and Children in Institutions.

Letter from Ministry of Local Government, No. P. 71807/36 Corcaigh (Ab), 14th April, 1936, enclosing, for the information of the Board, the following copy of a report received from Miss Fitzgerald-Kenny, Inspector, consequent on her recent inspection of children boarded-out in the West Cork Area:-

"Boarding-out in County Cork (West) appears satisfactory and the children dealt with are comfortably provided for on the whole.

There are many good foster-homes available in West County Cork, and care should be taken that these are selected. Unmarried women are not often desirable as foster-parents, as boys out-grow their control and girls in their charge are apt to become deceitful and secretive. Naturally, great care should always be taken even in selecting foster-homes where there are families.

A fact which may not be recognized, but which has been proved by experience, is that it is best to select foster-homes with families who have children of their own. If boarded-out in a childless household, the child has no playmate or friend of its own age, and if work has to be done, the boarded-out child will, as soon as it is able to work, run the risk of becoming the household drudge. There is the further difficulty in such cases that when the foster-parents go out they take the young child with them, possibly fatiguing it by the length of the walk, or they leave the child alone at home. Either alternative is unsuitable.

The system of advertising for foster-parents, however, is not always the best way of procuring homes, and the method of inquiry through the medium of the respective Parish Priest is one which I recommend in addition.

More children could be boarded-out in Assistance Officer Young's district, and freely in Assistance Officer Kelly's area, where only one child is placed.

Assistance Officer Mrs. C. McCarthy's area:
All the children appear to be well looked after.

Assistance Officer B. Whelton's area:
The homes are generally satisfactory.

Assistance Officer Mary McAuliffe:
In this district, one child is boarded-out with his grandmother, who with other amenities is said to have 30 acres of land.

Assistance Officer Lawton's area:
One of the foster-homes is not good; the boarded-out girl was dirty and neglected when inspected.

Meeting reports have also been preserved by the Cork City and County Archives.
(Source: Cork City Council)

UNAUTHORISED TENANTS.—The new houses at Charleville, the occupation of which by unauthorised persons was under discussion yesterday at a special meeting of the Cork County Board of Health. (Rea).

The occupation of brand new social housing units in Charleville by allegedly unauthorised tenants had served as a headache for the ambitious Cork County Board of Health.
(Source: 'Cork Examiner' 18/4/1933)

CONCLUSION

By the winter of 1934, the tangible results of nine years of systemic reform and community engagement were evident in every corner of County Cork. Where once thatch sagged under the weight of winter rain and wells ran dry in the height of summer, now sturdy cottages braced against the elements and household taps, fed by distant springs, flowed with crystal clarity. The story behind these changes lay less in ministerial decrees than in the transformation of local government: the consolidation of numerous smaller boards into cohesive councils endowed with both authority and accountability.

This reformed governance structure enabled resources to be marshalled effectively. Financial contributions from central authorities, once slow to materialise for isolated parishes, were now channelled swiftly through consolidated budgets. Revenue from rates, collected under more transparent and equitable systems, funded county-wide water schemes and housing loans. Crucially, elected representatives—town and rural councillors alike—found their voices amplified in joint forums, ensuring that the needs of tiny hamlets received the same attention as those of market towns.

A form of co-operative housing model, sustained by both tenant input and public funding, resulted in countless new cottages by 1934. These dwellings bore witness to the power of participatory planning: pitched roofs and modest footprints married practicality with local aesthetics, while gardens for vegetables and outdoor sheds for animal husbandry honoured the rural ethos. Interviews conducted decades later with families who moved into these homes recall the pride of laying the first bricks and the relief of retiring to a warm bedroom after long hours in the fields.

Healthcare renewal, too, rested on this bedrock of local authority. Small infirmaries, previously under-utilised relics of an older system, were reconfigured as community clinics offering vaccinations, maternity care, and basic surgery. Mobile health units traversed winding roads to bring services to remote townlands, staffed by nurses whose training had

been sponsored by county scholarships. Morbidity reports from the early 1920s, which once detailed recurrent outbreaks of typhoid and dysentery, gave way to statistics showing steep declines in waterborne illnesses. Public health educators, many drawn from rural backgrounds themselves, conducted hygiene classes in schools and community halls, sewing seeds of prevention that would flourish for decades.

Sanitation projects, the most technically ambitious of all, showcase the synergy between expert knowledge and local initiative. Geological surveys identified aquifers capable of supplying several parishes, while contract teams laid mains under the stewardship of newly appointed drainage committees. Even as mechanical pumps whirred in small engine houses, voluntary water guardians—village volunteers—were trained to monitor flow rates and test for dis-coloration, ensuring that the community remained vigilant stewards of its supply.

Yet these accomplishments were not without tensions. Debates over the balance of tenant versus ratepayer costs surfaced repeatedly in council sessions. Some rural stakeholders pushed back against the idea of paying higher levies for benefits perceived as urban-centric. Negotiations often involved lengthy compromises—phased repayment plans for cottage loans, staggered timelines for sewerage expansions—but ultimately strengthened the bonds between council and community.

Perhaps the most enduring legacy of this period lies in the changed expectations of Cork's citizens. No longer did they view housing improvements, safe water, or basic healthcare as charity; they regarded them as rightful outcomes of a responsive local government. Public meetings began to address preventive health and building standards alongside traditional topics like roads and market regulations. Local newspapers ran columns celebrating successful engineering projects as civic accomplishments, and school curricula incorporated lessons on sanitation alongside arithmetic and reading. This new civic culture radiated beyond County Cork's boundaries. Neighbouring counties adopted similar governance consolidations, modelled on Cork city and

county's integrated approach to public health and housing. National authorities, too, took note: guidelines issued from central ministries increasingly emphasised the role of empowered local councils, drawing on Cork's example of cooperative structures and participatory schemes.

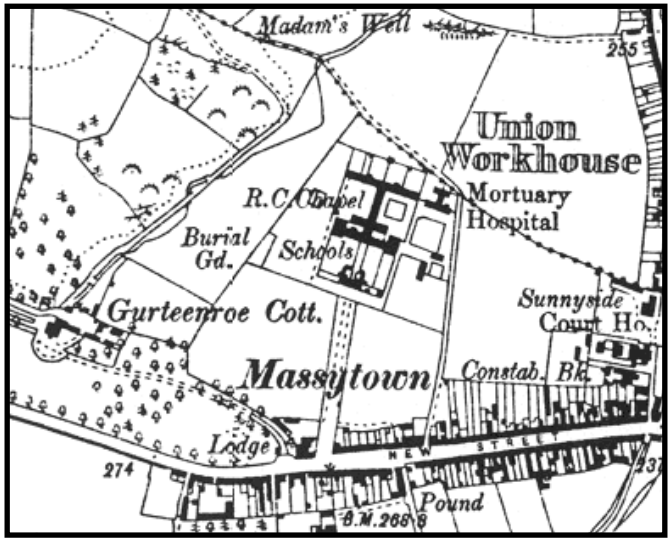
In retrospect, the years from 1925 to 1934 in County Cork illustrate the transformative potential of re-shaping governance at the grassroots. When local authorities were granted clearer mandates, adequate resources, and the trust of their constituents, they became catalysts for widespread welfare improvements. The modest act of merging fragmented boards into unified councils set in motion a hidden revolution: one that flowed through pipes, warmed through hearths, and healed through clinic doors, ultimately weaving a stronger social fabric that endured long after the first grants were spent.

As contemporary communities face new public health challenges—from environmental sustainability to ageing populations—there is much to learn from Cork's quiet metamorphosis. It affirms that durable progress often begins not with sweeping proclamations but with incremental, locally rooted reforms: aligning governance structures, listening to residents' voices, and cultivating the expertise—both professional and lay—that turns good intentions into lasting change.

The old Kinsale Workhouse, County Cork. Photo taken by Gerard McCarthy.
(Source: 'Irish Central' 20/5/2022)

TABLES OF KEY LEGISLATION AND ORDERS FROM PERIOD

Act / Order	Function and Significance
Local Government (Temporary Provisions) Act 1923	Abolished the Poor Law Unions and Boards of Guardians; enabled transitional governance.
County Scheme Orders (1924)	Re-organised local health and welfare into County and District Boards of Health.
Housing (Building Facilities) Act 1924	Facilitated state-assisted housing schemes via loans and grants to local authorities.
Housing Act 1929	Expanded rural housing support; allowed for the building of cottages for rural labourers.
Housing Act 1931	Increased grants for local authority housing and encouraged slum clearance initiatives.
Public Health Acts (various, consolidated 1878–1934)	Provided the legal framework for sanitation, water, sewage, and communicable disease control.
Labourers Acts (1883–1936)	Long-term framework for rural housing provision, with continued relevance into the Irish Free State period.
Board of Health Regulations (1925 onward)	Defined the various powers, responsibilities, and procedures for the new County and District Boards.

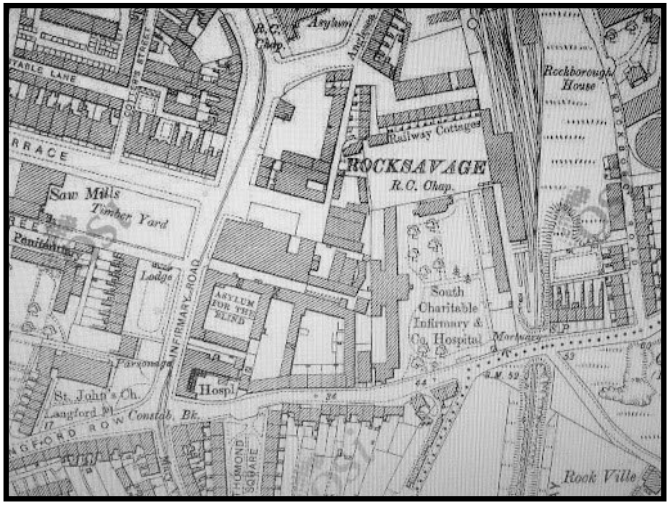


The Macroom Union Workhouse (depicted here on a map) was one of several establishments superseded by cottage hospitals, run by the Cork County Board of Health.
(Source: workhouses.org.uk)

HOSPITALS, HOUSING & SANITATION

TABLES OF DIVERGENCE BETWEEN THE IRISH FREE STATE AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

Irish Free State	United Kingdom
Abolished the Poor Law system in the 1920s, replacing it with County Boards of Health and Public Assistance under the Local Government Acts and County Schemes.	Retained the Poor Law system in much of its form until the Local Government Act 1929, which transferred responsibilities to county and borough councils.
Adopted a county-based model with centralised oversight by the Department of Local Government and Public Health, but executed by local Boards of Health.	Adopted a local authority model, with broader discretion at the borough and county council levels after 1929 reforms.
Emphasis on multi-purpose County Homes (post-workhouse), often serving aged, chronically ill, and poor populations under a single institution.	Developed a more specialised institutional model, with clearer separation between hospitals, workhouses, and welfare homes.
Pioneered early housing reform in rural areas, e.g. through the Housing Acts of 1924, 1929, 1931, including Labourers' Cottage Schemes.	More extensive urban housing schemes, such as large-scale slum clearance and suburban council estates in cities like Greater London and Manchester.
Health services were under-resourced and fragmented between local and central authority, limiting service quality in many counties.	Better resourced public health departments in larger municipal authorities, with more consistent medical infrastructure.
Central government often constrained by fiscal austerity, prioritising limited, gradual reforms.	Larger financial base allowed for more ambitious welfare reforms, especially in urban areas during the interwar years.



Map of the grounds of Cork City's Victoria Hospital and South Infirmary, c.1910 .
(Source: Cork City Libraries)

DÁN - '*BORD SLÁINTE CHORCAÍ*'

Dán le Tadgh O'Cúill-Maonlaí

I gCorcaigh Thiar i ndiaidh an chogaidh,
Níorbh éasca an saol – bhí fuacht is cliseadh ann,
Bhí an rialtas nua le ceilt ina shuaimhneas,
Ach tháinig an brú ó na sráideanna síos.

Fágadh an pobal leis féin sa doircheacht,
Cíos is cruatan i ngach coirnéal gan treoir,
Ach tháinig bord le cúram mall,
Ag lorg sláinte don ghnáthdhuine thall.

Dochtúirí ag triall, málaí ina lámh,
Ag tabhairt cuairte, go minic gan trácht,
Altraí ag siúl, cosnochta i bhfliuchras,
Ag tabhairt dóchais i measc na cruinneas.

Ó Bhéal Átha an Ghaorthaidh go Cúil Aodha thall,
Scaip siad an scéal, mar sholas ar chnoc chnámh,
Bhí cigirí thart, ag féachaint faoi dhó,
Ag déanamh an gníomh — gan mórán rá.

Is inniu a ndéanaimid buíochas dá ndícheall,
Na laochra ciúine nach bhfuair mórán scéala,
Bord Sláinte Chorcaí – croí na linne,
Ag cur sláinte is seirbhís i gcroílár an phobail.

*English language version - '*The Cork Health Board*':

Out west in Cork after the war,
Life was no comfort – there was cold and collapse.
The new State kept to itself in quiet reserve,
But pressure rose from the streets below.

The people were left alone in the dark,
With rent and hardship in every corner, unguided.
But a board appeared, slow to start,
Seeking health for the common heart.

Doctors made rounds, with bags in hand,
Calling at doors across the land.
Nurses walked on, bare feet in rain,
Bringing hope through grief and strain.

From Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh to far Cúil Aodha,
They spread the message — a rising glow.
Inspectors came, not once but twice,
Doing the work, without much voice.

And today, we give them our heartfelt praise,
The quiet heroes of those hard days.
The Cork Health Board — heart of a time,
Who placed care and service at the centre of life.

COTTAGE TENANCIES.

Meeting Of Cork County Board Of Health.

A meeting of the members of the Cork County Board of Health was held yesterday. The members present were—Messrs. Wm. J. Broderick, Michael Walsh, Jerh. McCarthy, Richard Daly, Patrick O'Donovan, Cornelius O'Callaghan, John Daly, T.D., E. Goold, D. Henchion.

On the motion of Mr. John Daly, seconded by Mr. Donovan, Mr. Broderick was re-elected Chairman.

Mr. Broderick then took the chair, and said he was very grateful to the members for the election to that—one of the greatest honours in the gift of the County Council.

On the motion of Mr. John Daly, seconded by Mr. Jeremiah McCarthy, Mr. Cornelius O'Callaghan was re-elected Vice-Chairman.

Mr. O'Callaghan in returning thanks said the abundance of work connected with the Health Board since the dissolution of the Boards of Guardians and District Councils showed the importance of the committee. It was his opinion it may open a variety of changes, but he would say that the Government was right in what they had done, for it was only when they came into office that the abuses, principally in reference to the letting of cottages, became really apparent. In the County of Cork over one and a quarter million of money had been spent under the labourers' Acts, and the abuses which crept in within the past five or six years were certainly most unfair. He hoped their administration would be a great improvement on what was done in the past.

The best way to improve our administration is to build more cottages, because the labourers were never in such a bad way.

Mr. O'Callaghan—Will you bring down the money?

Mr. John Daly—I will.

SUB-COMMITTEES' POWERS.

The personnel of the various sub-committees (already published) were then read and approved.

The meeting then went into the consideration of the powers, etc., to be delegated to the sub-committees.

A discussion took place as to whether plenary powers with reference to the letting and repairs to labourers' cottages, etc., should be delegated to the sub-committee.

Mr. McCarthy proposed, and Mr. John Daly seconded: "That the sub-committees be given power to finally deal with all urgent matters in connection with sanitation, existing lighting and water supplies, which could not remain over for the meeting of the Board of Public Health; and also power to make lettings of labourers' cottages, and arrange for the repair of same in cases where the repairs cannot lie over until the next meeting of the Board of Public Health, and with power to determine tenancies of labourers' cottages and institute proceedings for the recovery of possession of labourers' cottages as they may decide."

Mr. C. O'Callaghan proposed, and Mr. R. Daly, seconded: "That no powers be given to the sub-committees, only the powers given to them under the Act."

A poll was taken when there voted:—

For Mr. O'Callaghan's amendment—Messrs. Michael Walsh, R. Daly, C. O'Callaghan and E. Goold.—4

Against—Messrs. Jerh. McCarthy, Patk. Donovan, John Daly and the Chairman.—4.

Mr. Henchion—Am I not entitled to vote, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman—You resigned your seat on the Board.

Mr. Carey—You were generous too soon.

CITY SPECIAL EDITION.

Examiner Office, 5.30 a.m.

LEAGUE SAVES BALKANS

The "Times" discussing the Greco-Bulgarian situation, says:—Without the League it is quite certain that both peoples would by now be locked in a death grapple, to the great content of Moscow and the Third International, and to the dismay of Western Europe. The Commission will render a great service both to Europe and the Balkan States if it can find a practicable and acceptable method of preventing such collisions in future.

TURKISH ATROCITIES.

The "Daily Chronicle," referring to the appeal that is addressed to this country by the distressed Christian refugees in the villages north of Mosul, says—These refugees have been the victims of appalling atrocities at the hands of the Turks, who stopped at nothing in their determination to remove or exterminate a population who wished to live under the protection of the British mandate.

BANDITS HOLD UP MOTOR COACH.

Paris, Wednesday.—Last night, on the main road from Ain Tagrout to Setif in Algeria, a band of about 30 masked Arabs armed with rifles and clubs held up a motor coach carrying some 50 passengers and a quantity of merchandise. The motor coach passengers were lined up on the roadside at the point of the bandit's rifles and robbed of their money, jewels, and other valuables.—"Daily Mail" correspondent.

MOROCCAN WAR.

Determined Peace Effort.

The "Daily Express" understands that a determined effort is to be made during the next few days to end the Moroccan war, and that even now terms are on their way from Abd El Krim to M. Steeg, the French resident general.

FOREIGN LOANS.

The "Morning Post," referring to the removal of the embargo on foreign loans and loans to the Dominions and Colonies as an integral part of the policy of returning to the gold standard, just as the imposition of the embargo was required for a time in order to make the return to the gold st lard possible, says it is a matter of great satisfaction that the Dominions and Colonies are once more able to borrow freely of this country. Their credit is unimpeachable, and the people of this country know that the money invested in the Empire will bring them a return over and above the profits of the financial transaction.

BRITISH FILMS.

The "Daily Mail" is informed that as a result of the meeting in London last night of the committee set up to develop plans for the stimulation of the British film industry and the production of British films, definite progress towards the desired end has been made. The committee it is understood, is considering a proposal to set up a national film studio for the use of the trade in producing all-British

AROUND THE WORLD.

Conscientious Objectors.

An offer by Mrs. W. A. Albright to present to Birmingham a statuette in memory of conscientious objectors who refused to fight under conscription in the war, to be placed in the colonnade adjacent to the Hall of Memory has been declined by the General Purposes Committee of the Birmingham City Council.

Deposition of the Shah.

A Teheran message says that the resolution passed in the Mojliss deposing the Kajar Dynasty is the result of a sudden outburst of national sentiment throughout Persia against that dynasty. Parliament feeling that there was a danger of a revolution decided to depose the Kajars and to place the chief power in the State temporarily in the hands of Reza Khan, the Prime Minister, leaving the decision as to the permanent form of Government to the National Constituent Assembly that is to be convened. Reza Khan has held a public court and reception at which he expressed great hopes for the future.

Bishop of Oxford's View.

Dr. Strong, the new Bishop of Oxford, replying yesterday to a welcome by the diocese, remarked that he was of the opinion that it should be decided that no man could really order a live religion out of slavish submission to the past. He said there is a Catholic and an Evangelical and a Modernist in each of us. So with the history of the churches. There have been times when tradition has burdened men's consciences like the traditions of men which Our Lord denounced. We do want to find a new method for the new age in which we live of getting behind our inherited controversial formulæ, of finding out where we diverge, and why. When we do this we shall see things in their true proportion and understand one another better than we have done in the past

Latin "Finance."

The Earl of Birkenhead, speaking at Dumfries last night, said either Britain must reduce national expenditure or cease to balance her Budget, and descend to the dangerous subterfuges of Latin finance. "We are going to cut down expenditure," he said, "and by a method of sound finance balance our Budget and maintain the value of our currency."

Labour Inquiries.

Several British Labour representatives have arrived at Bombay to inquire into the conditions of industry in India. They include Mr. Thomas Johnston, M.P. for Dundee, and Mr. Sims, secretary of the Jute Workers' Union. The visit is said to be in connection with a Labour Party resolution on international traffic in sweated goods, and the object of the mission is to obtain first-hand impressions of India, says the "Daily News" Bombay correspondent.

The New Zealand Elections.

The New Zealand Elections have resulted in a sweeping victory for the Coate's Government. The New Zealand House of Representatives consists of 80 members. The above telegram shows that the Government or Reform Party will have a clear majority of 25 over all other parties combined.

Italo-German Commercial Treaty.

A Commercial Treaty to run for five years has been signed by Italy and Germany. The Treaty gives Germany most favoured nation rights in Italy for her metallurgical and chemical products. In return Germany will permit the importation of raw silk from Italy free of all duties. Italian agricultural products and wines, while not being admitted duty free into Germany, will benefit by substantial reductions. The Treaty is to be ratified on December 15th, says the "Chicago Tribune."